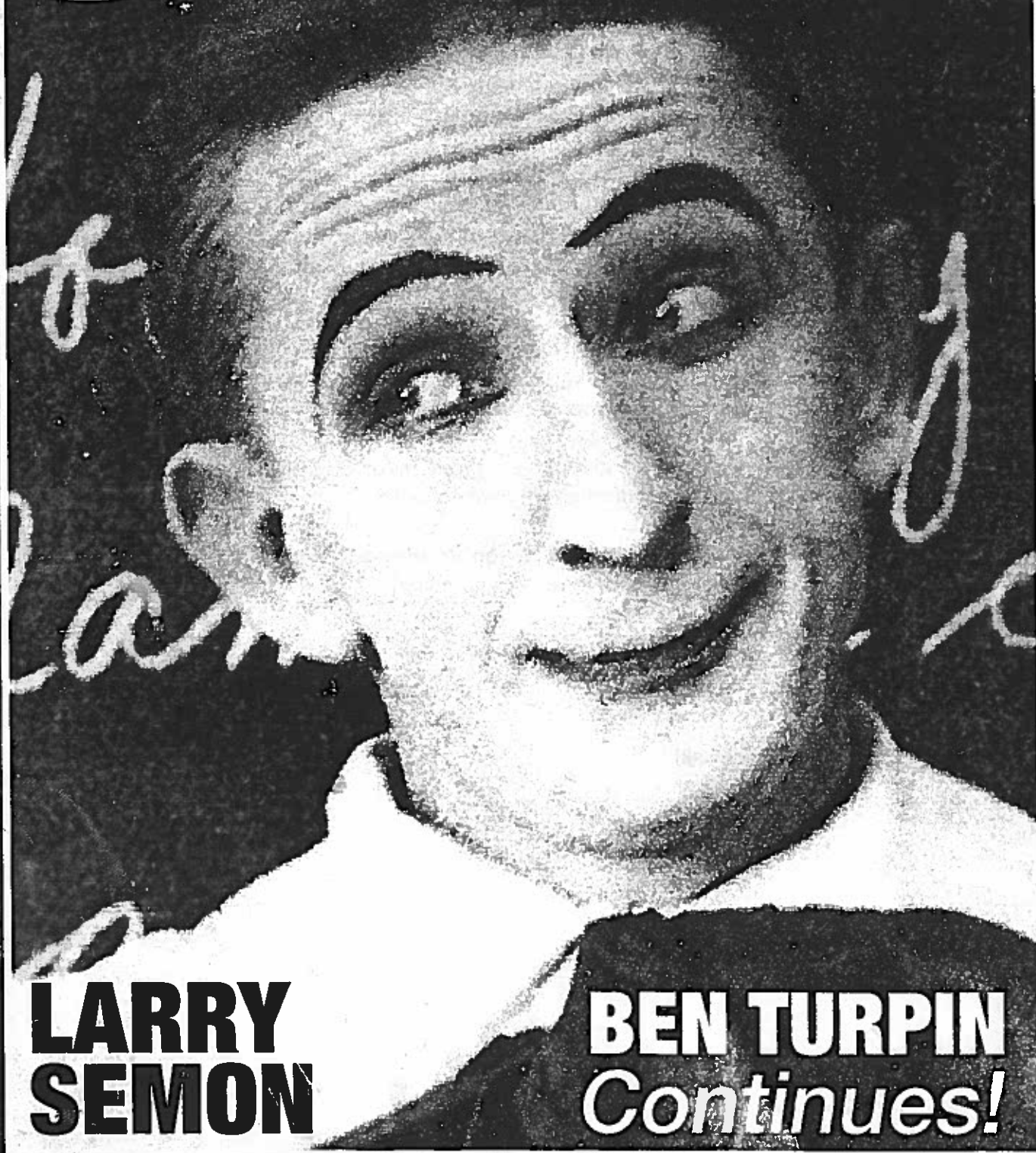


The Magazine Devoted to the Appreciation, Documentation & Preservation of Early Film Comedy

SlapStick! ²



**LARRY
SEMON**

BEN TURPIN
Continues!

DEDICATION

Over the years I've made many friends who have shared the same interest in early comedy and many of whom have been of tremendous help. To those people I dedicate this second issue to you...

Rob Farr, Joe Moore, Bill Sprague, George Reed, Paul & Christal Kassig, Ralph Secinaro, Richard Roberts, Cole Johnson, Mark Johnson, Steve Massa, Pierre Pageau, Jean-Jacques Couderc, Floyd Bennett, Andrew McKay, Claudia Sassen, Ladd McIntosh, Eddie Quillan, Madeline Hurlock-Sherwood, Walter Lantz, Hal Haig-Priest, and there's been many more whom time has caused me to forget; you know who you are so forgive me!

Thanks must also be given to everyone involved in the making of these early comedies we love so well.

Special thanks to my family, son Rodney and his mother, Sheila, for always being here. Thank you all,

Steve Rydzewski
- Editor

The Magazine Devoted to the Appreciation, Documentation & Preservation of Early Film Comedy

SlapStick!

WELCOME!

Welcome to the second issue of Slapstick! The magazine dedicated to the appreciation, documentation and preservation of early film comedy!

First off, I want to thank everyone for your positive feedback of our first issue! You made this second issue possible! And with your help, we're gonna keep pluggin' away at this labor of love!

I wanted to make some changes with this second issue, a few might be obvious, others will have to wait till next issue – *there wasn't enough time!*

Keep the feedback coming, let us know what we should do to improve the magazine. For now, enjoy this issue and let me get to work on number three!

Take care and enjoy!

Steve Rydzewski
– Editor



Marceline Day
1909 - 2000



For Arts Sake Ben Turpin



The Early Years Part Two

Ben Turpin, the famous cross-eyed silent screen comedian, was nearly fifty years old when he signed with the King of Comedy Mack Sennett in March 1917. His previous ten years of hard work and struggling in motion pictures had been in relative obscurity, as were his number of years on the stage. However, it was an experience and an education he learned well.

Charlie Chaplin, considered by many as the greatest of motion picture artists, joined Essanay in late 1914. He had spent the past year with Mack Sennett's Keystone where he was introduced and educated in the production of movies. Sennett later recalled, "I remember one thing about Chaplin. He was the most interested person where he himself, his future, the kind of thing he was trying to do, was concerned, that I ever knew. He wanted to work and nearly all the time. We went to work at eight o'clock and he was there at seven. We quit at five, say, or later, but he'd still be around at six, and wanting to talk about his work to me all the time."

In his autobiography, Chaplin recalled, "Niles was an hour's drive outside of San Francisco, situated along a railroad track. It was a small town with a population of four hundred and its preoccupation was alfalfa and cattle raising. The studio was situated in the center of a field, about four miles outside. When I saw it my heart sank, for nothing could have been less inspiring. It had a glassed-in roof, which made it extremely hot when working in the summer. Anderson said that I would find the studios in Chicago more to my liking and better equipped for making comedies. I stayed only an hour in Niles while Anderson transacted some business with his staff. Then we both left for San

Francisco again, where we embarked for Chicago."

Arriving in Chicago, Anderson and Chaplin were greeted by the studio manager who said that Spoor was away on business and would not return until after the New Year's holiday. On New Year's Day, Anderson returned to California after assuring Chaplin that everything would be attended to upon Spoor's return.

It would have been on or about the fourth of January, 1915, when Chaplin began work at Essanay. He later recalled, "I was beligerant because they (the company employees) seemed so vague about everything and because of Spoor's absence; besides, the studio personnel were stuffy and went around like bank clerks, carrying requisition papers as though they were members of the Guaranty Trust Company – the business end of it was very impressive, but not their films. In the upstairs office the different departments were partitioned like tellers' cages. It was anything but conducive to creative work. At six o'clock, no matter whether a director was in the middle of a scene or not, the lights were turned off and everybody went home.

"The next morning I went to the casting office. 'I would like a cast of some sort,' I said dryly, 'so will you kindly send

ESSANAY is now offering to exhibitors three of the greatest stars the photoplay world has ever seen...the A.B.C. of drama and comedy...**Mr. G.M. Anderson** **Mr. Francis X. Bushman** and **Mr. Charles Chaplin**

Mr. Anderson has made "Broncho Billy" the best known of any photoplay character. **Mr. Bushman** has been voted the most popular actor and dramatic star in the world. **Mr. Chaplin**, the most wonderful comedian ever seen on the screen, is in himself a guarantee of **ESSANAY QUALITY.**







the only moustache I had. I stuck it on, changed my clothes and came out. Charlie took a look and began to laugh.

"Haw!" he yelled. "What sort of funny-looking egg is this I've got to play against?"

"He laughed some more and kept on laughing. Everytime he looked at me he started again."

Chaplin wrote, "During my short stay in Chicago, Spoor did everything to placate me, but I could never really warm up to him. I told him I was unhappy working in Chicago and that if he wanted results he should arrange for me to work in California. 'We'll do everything we can to make you happy,' he said. 'How would you like to go to Niles?'

"I was not too pleased at the prospect, but I liked Anderson better than Spoor, so after completing *His New Job* I went to Niles.

"It was disturbing moving again from one studio to another. I had to organize another working unit, which meant selecting a satisfactory cameraman, an assistant director and a stock company."

Turpin remembered, "Well, we played together..., but one day Charlie suggested that we go somewhere else.

"Come on, let's go to California," he said. "This bally climate is too cold, don't you know!"

"He was making up a company and he put in a word for me."

Arriving home that night, Ben was excited over the news and the prospect of moving to California; however he wasn't sure what his wife's response would be. To his surprise,

Ben meets Charlie Chaplin while applying for "His New Job"

me members of your company who are unoccupied?"

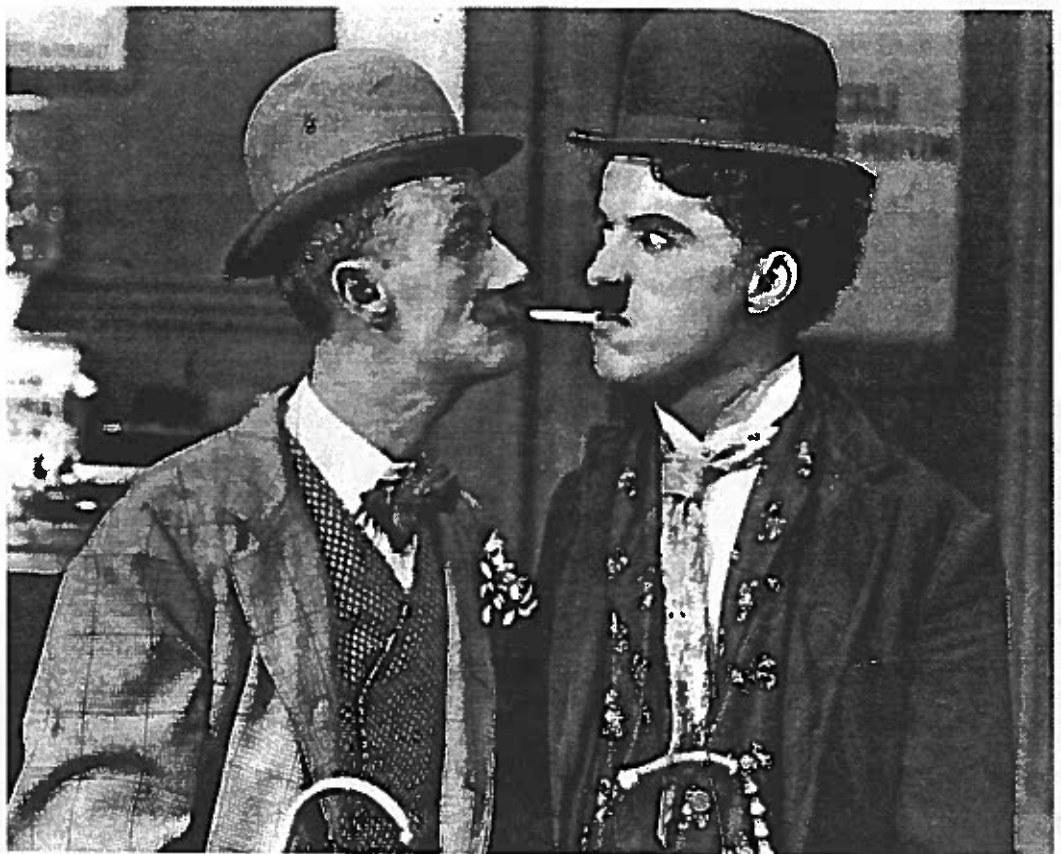
"They presented people who they thought might be suitable. There was a chap with cross eyes named Ben Turpin, who seemed to know the ropes and was not doing much with Essanay at the time. Immediately I took a liking to him, so he was chosen."

Turpin recalled in 1924, "'Ben,' somebody said to me, 'meet Charlie Chaplin!'

"I didn't know who Charlie Chaplin was, but they put me on to work with him.

"Ben," he said - he had a broad English accent - 'put on your - aw - make-up and let a fellow see - aw - how you look.'

"So I went in and got the piece of an old wig that was



Carrie encouraged the move, "Never mind, Ben, better times are coming out there. We'll make it."

Motography Jan 30, 1915, pg 166:

Chaplin Returns to California

The Charles Chaplin Essanay comedy company left Chicago for Niles, Calif., last Thursday, where it began work upon arrival. While in Chicago a two reel special picture was produced, which will be released about Feb. 1. It was at first planned to have the comedian work in the Chicago studio, but on account of the lack of available exterior locations and the climatic conditions it was thought best to return to the West. Ben Turpin and Leo White, who have been in the Chicago company for sometime, were among the players who left with Mr. Chaplin.



Scene from Charlie's second short for Essanay, "A Night Out," with Turpin, Chaplin, and Leo White

In her article, *The Lonely Clown*, Dorothy Donnell wrote: "Those who know him say that Ben Turpin has always been humble of soul, and it must have seemed a miracle to him that any woman could love him, the laughable, the clown of life. It was the thought of Carrie, and what he could do for her, that nerved him to take Charlie Chaplin's advice when Essanay sent for him to offer him a contract.

"Ask them for plenty!" Charlie told him, 'Don't let them beat you down. Stick up for your rights.'"

"I went in to see the manager; signed up, and when I came out, there stood Charlie. I stretched out my hand.

"Shake!" I said.

"I was feeling pretty good. It looked like a great chance, and I owed it to him.

"Fine! How much did you sign-up for, Ben?" he asked.

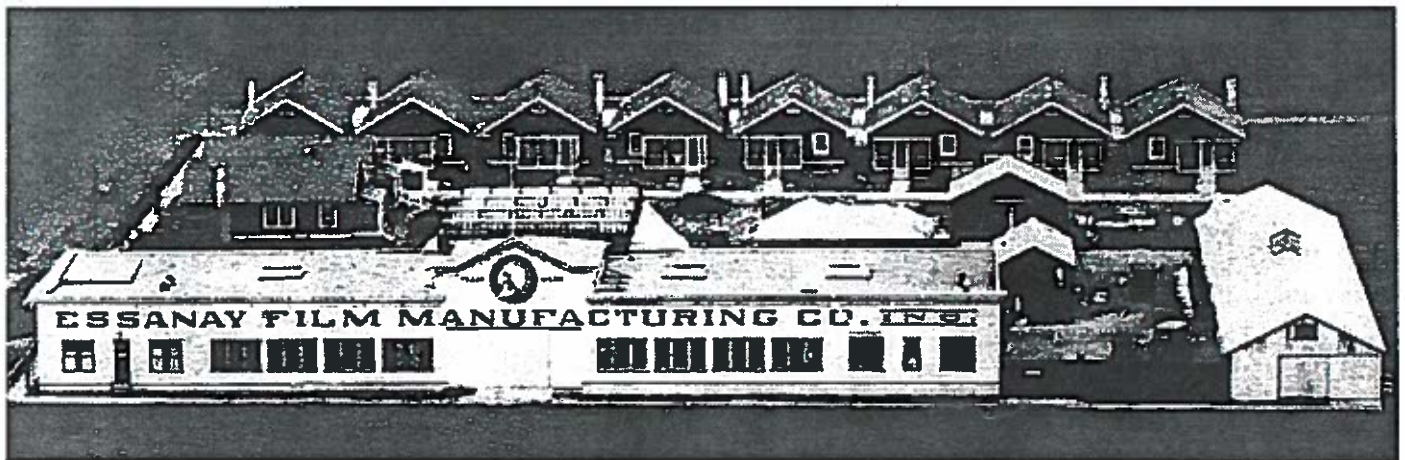
"Twenty-five bucks a week, yes, sir, twenty-five a week!" I told him.

"It was five more than I was getting, and I appreciated it. But Charlie nearly fell over backward.

"The guy nearly choked to death. He laughed until I thought he was going to crack somewhere. At last he managed to get out a little wheeze. All he could say was, 'You damn fool!', then he busted out again. I found out later he signed up for twelve hundred and fifty a week!

"I was signed up for two years for twenty-five a week, without anything said about a raise. But after a while they raised me to fifty a week."

The Essanay Studios at Niles, California with employee bungalows in the rear





Charles Chaplin, the one responsible for bringing Ben Turpin to California

From Chicago, the Turpin's, along with Leo White, came west with the Chaplin company. Ben and Carrie were set-up with their own little bungalow, next to Rollie Totheroh, who would become Charlie's long-time cinematographer.

Almost immediately Chaplin organized his unit at Niles with Turpin as stooge, Leo White as foil, and added Bud Jamison as the heavy and beautiful Edna Purviance as leading lady. The little company plunged right into Charlie's second two-reeler, *A Night Out*.

"Charlie ruined a lot of film trying to look serious at me... and could not act at all. He was told to straighten up and get to business, but he said, 'I can't. That chap's expression has me laughing, and I can't stop. If you want me to work, get him out of here.'"

Rollie Totheroh, Essanay cameraman, much later recalled for author's Kalton Lahue and Sam Gill in their *Clown Princes and Court Jesters*, "Ben wanted 'equal time' with Charlie and salary to match. When Charlie saw Ben getting as much of the show and publicity as himself, he let Ben go after having brought him out to California from Chicago."

Ben recalled, "You've heard the rumor of Charlie killing a man in a picture, haven't you? Well, that was me. Some bump, believe me!" The bump layed Turpin up in bed for a while forcing his absence from Chaplin's third Essanay, *The Champion*. When fully recuperated, Ben rejoined the Chaplin unit and made a small appearance as a salesman who recklessly rambles through the crowd of boxing fans in order to sell his snacks.

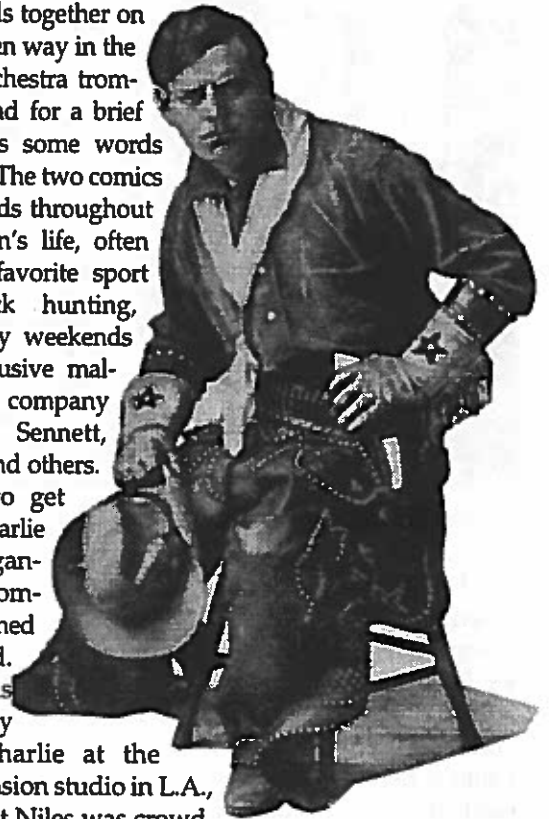
At this time, Charlie and Ben both make a surprise appearance in Anderson's Broncho Billy short, *His Regeneration*, which might just be the last documented appearance of these two

comedy legends together on film. Ben is seen way in the back as the orchestra trombone player and for a brief moment shares some words with Chaplin. The two comics remained friends throughout the rest of Ben's life, often sharing their favorite sport together, duck hunting, spending many weekends chasing the elusive mallard, often in company with Mack Sennett, Thomas Ince and others.

Anxious to get back to L.A, Charlie once again organized a small company and returned to Hollywood. Anderson was more than happy to set up Charlie at the Bradbury Mansion studio in L.A., for the space at Niles was crowded and Charlie had begun to monopolize the studio.

Chaplin documented in his autobiography, "I made four comedies at Niles, but as the studio facilities were not satisfactory, I did not feel settled or contented there, so I suggested to Anderson my going to Los Angeles, where they had better facilities for making comedies. He agreed, but also for another reason: because I was monopolizing the studio, which was not adequately staffed for three companies. So he negotiated the renting of a small studio at Boyle Heights, which is in the heart of Los Angeles."

With Charlie's parting, he took with him Edna Purviance, Leo White, Bud Jamison, Billy Armstrong, Paddy McQuire and Lloyd Bacon, and further enlarged his company with people like Snub Pollard.



Leo White, Turpin, Harry Todd, Vic Potel in one of the Snakeville's



Ben has his hands full with Harry Todd's wife, Margaret Joslin

Turpin got along fine at Essanay without Chaplin. Afterall, Ben was reunited with many of his old friends at Niles: Anderson, Harry Todd and his wife Margaret Joslin, Vic Potel, Jess Robbins and others. And there was plenty of work for Ben in Anderson's *Broncho Billy* series and the *Snakeville* comedies as well as the *Sweedie* series with Wallace Beery who recently also came west. Beery later recalled, "Broncho Billy directed the first company and I directed those who were left over, including Vic Potel, Lloyd Bacon, Ethel Clayton and Ben Turpin. I had been at



Scene of Leo White, Wallace Beery, and Ben as "Sweedie's Hero"

Niles three months when everything went haywire, and I came to Los Angeles out of a job."

Following the expiration of Turpin's Essanay contract early in 1916, Ben had been seeking work unsuccessfully. The studio was having problems and decided not to renew his contract which infuriated Ben. Fortunately for him, he soon received a call from the studio:

"Some time later the company decided to pad out an old two-reeler of Charlie's (*Burlesque on Carmen*) and make a four-reeler of it. I had worked in it*, and they needed me. But I had learned some things about taking care of myself, so when the manager came around to see me, I was ready for him.

* upon close examination of the film, Ben does not appear in any of the same scenes as Chaplin during the four-reel version of *Burlesque on Carmen*



The menfolk of *Snakeville* in another early comedy, Ben at far right.

"All right," I said "I'll work. But I want two-hundred and fifty bucks a week!"

"Two hundred and fifty?!" he said. "Ben, you're crazy! What's the big idea?"

"I mean I want two hundred and fifty a week or I don't act!"

"Well they gave it to me, and tore up my old contract. I worked with them three weeks more and finished the four-reeler; then I said to myself:

"Here's where I get me a business manager!"

"I got one, a dandy. I certainly owe him a lot. Among other things, he taught me how to save. I had never saved a penny before. He got me a contract for a year at one hundred dollars a week.

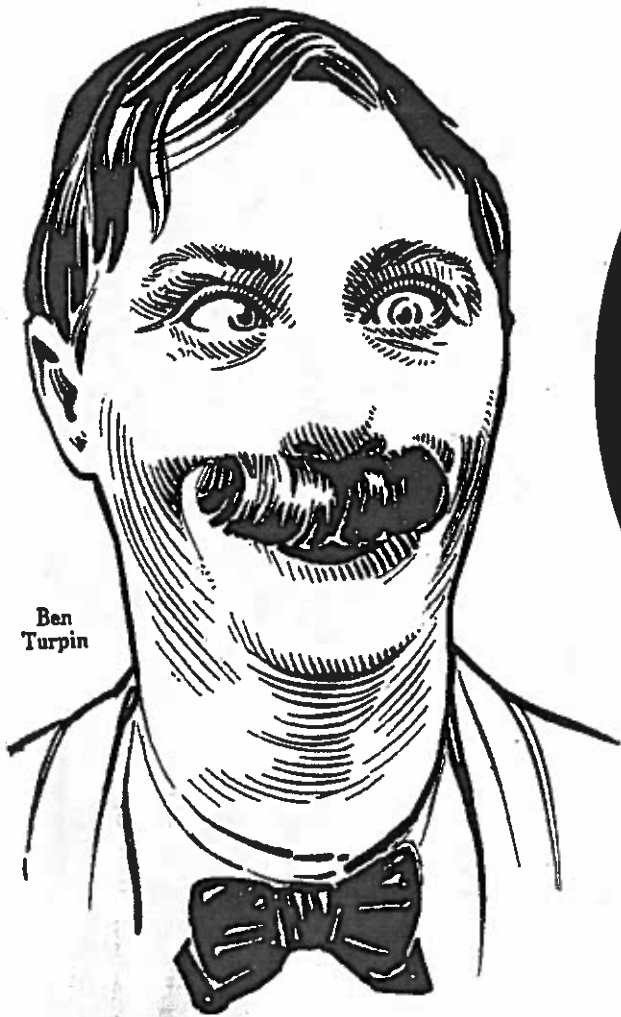
"Now, Ben," he said, "I'm not going to charge you any fee for this contract if you do what I say. You've got to save sixty dollars a week out of this hundred – sixty *every week*."

"That was a starter. Everything I've got today I owe to his teaching me how to save..."

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

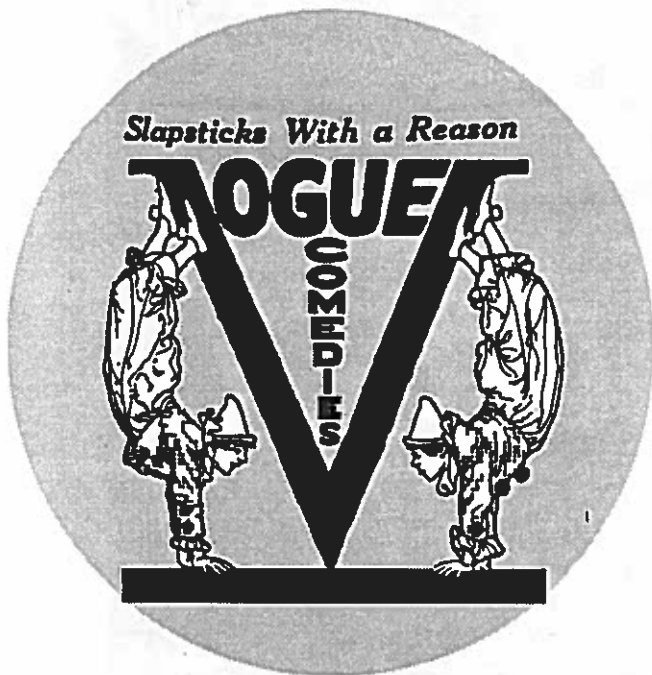


Possibly a scene from "*Snakeville's Champion*"



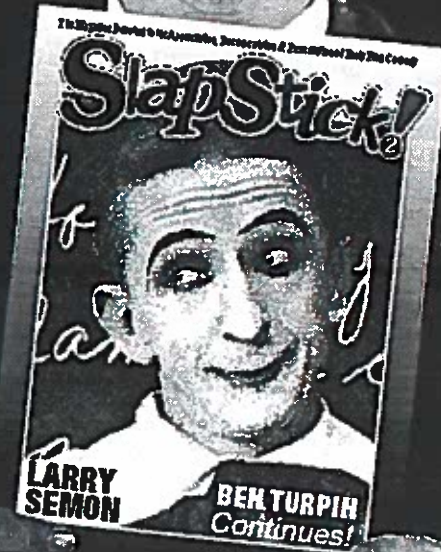
Ben
Turpin

NEXT ISSUE
**BEN
TURPIN**
at
VOGUE



Rube
Miller

SlapStick!



Everybody's
Reading It!

A Cross Eyed View of New York

Ben Turpin Looks at the Great Metropolis from Several Angles

by Beverly Crane

as originally appeared in *Movie Weekly*, October 22, 1921

"Take your choice and concentrate," instructed a dynamic personage.

"Don't look both ways or you'll be floored," grinned an ex-pugilist.

"The crossing at the bridge - when 'they' be eyes - is most deceptive," prattled the ingenue.

All were talking about Ben Turpin and in their respective ways endeavoring to give us a little advice about how to look at his puzzling orbs. They weren't especially instructive nor even facetious.

The first, however, we found to be more useful of the verbal offerings, for Turpin is a rather dizzy person to hold speech with, if you try your utmost to gaze into both eyes at the same time.

We saw Ben at the Astor Hotel, recognizing him with a little difficulty. Without his makeup and minus the exaggerated twist he gives his eyes when working, he would pass in a crowd without ever being discovered.

We found a forsaken nook on the balcony floor and there, save for a brief interruption by Mrs. Turpin, we remained until the clock chimed the half hour.

Ben's voice was mighty husky - nope, not night air, just too much speaking and too many personal appearances. We had no trouble looking at the eccentric comedian at all we just took our choice and concentrated!

"I'm supposed to have a thirteen-week vacation," he said, "but if Mr. Sennett asks me if I'm rested when I get back, I'll just pass away!"

"But you are certainly making a lot of new friends," we offered.

"Yes. I suppose so. But I'll be happy to get home. All this," he gestured broadly, "is not new to me. I lived here years ago. I don't enjoy going out every night. I've lived that kind of life. I'm a man of fifty-five years," whimsically. "When I'm home I get up at five o'clock in the morning, have a swim and a round or two of boxing with my Jap chauffeur, breakfast, and by nine I'm at the studio and ready for work. At four-thirty I'm through; at eight I'm in bed."

This is the quiet life with a vengeance, but it explains why Ben, a man of fifty-five, looks like a man of forty; why he is capable of cavorting around as spry and sprightly-like as the young ones.

Ben's present makeup is a relic of the old Essanay days when he was a member of Charlie Chaplin's company. Ben was

engaged at the studio to play character roles, at the lowly stipend of twenty dollars a week. He played them straight - no moustache. One day, Charlie was in a grand rush for a character man. He told Ben to put on a makeup in a hurry.

Ben didn't have the kind of makeup that he knew Charlie wanted, and he certainly didn't have time to go and get a moustache. He devised a scheme all his own and it worked famously. What he actually did was to cut a moustache from a wig and paste it on. When Charlie caught one glimpse of him, he sat down and roared.

When Chaplin decided to go West, he persuaded Turpin to go with him. Ben was reluctant to leave Chicago, it being, after all, home. He and his wife had just built a nice little bungalow and furnished it to meet with their simple tastes. But a livelihood was a livelihood, so Ben went West.

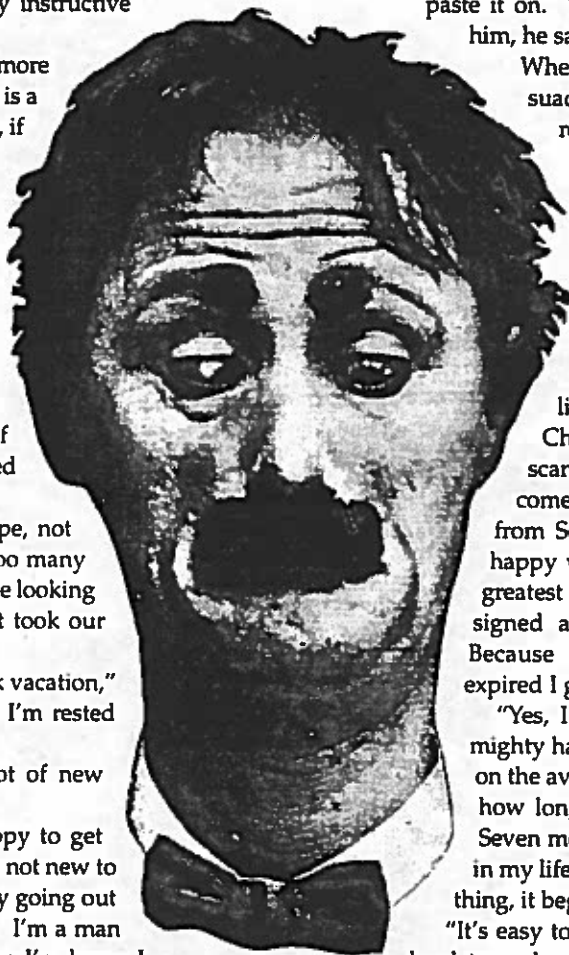
"I've had big offers to leave Sennett. I had one offer recently that would have meant a quarter of a million salary for me. But why? Charlie Chaplin and Fatty Arbuckle - before the scandal - are the only two ex-Sennett comedians who have made a success away from Sennett. I get a good salary and I'm happy with Mr. Sennett. I consider him the greatest producer of comedy today. I just signed a new two-year contract with him. Because I did this before my old contract expired I got a nice little bonus.

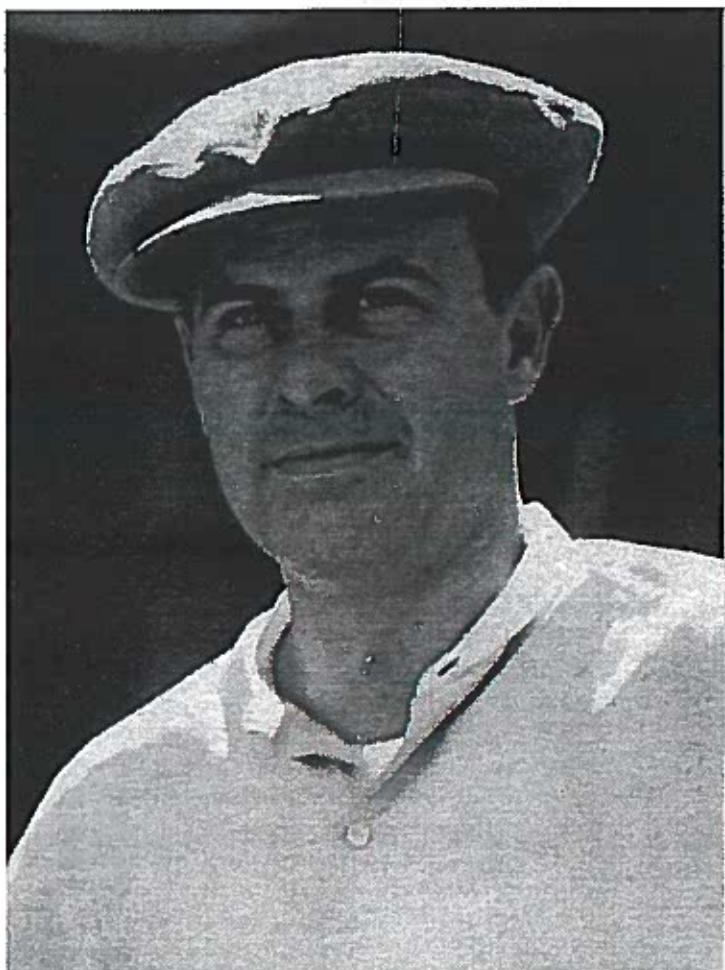
"Yes, I enjoy my work in pictures, but it's mighty hard. To make a two-reel comedy takes on the average of six weeks. And do you know how long it took to make *A Small Town Idol*? Seven months. I never was so sick of anything in my life as I was of that picture. The same old thing, it began to seem like, every day.

"It's easy to play in dramatic pictures. It isn't so hard to make people cry. But try and make them laugh! Mr. Sennett sees every foot of film that is taken. If he laughs - fine! If he doesn't - it has to be re-taken."

"And you'll be glad to get home," we said, as the clock chimed the half-hour.

"Indeed I will," rising as we did. "God bless you and give you all success," he said in parting, and we took one long, last look at the most famous pair of eyes in the world, before leaving the little comedian.







AMONG THOSE PRESENT

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy
in two reels Released April 5, 1919
Directed by Erle Kenton & Ray Grey
Cinematography by Fred Jackman & Victor Scheurich

CAST

Ford Sterling.....A First Nighter
Bert Roach.....A Husband Whose Hobby Was His Wife
Phyllis Haver.....His Hobby
Myrtle Lind.....An Out-Door Girl
Eddie Gribbon.....A Versatile Participant
Bothwell Browne.....An Orchestra Leader
Edgar Kennedy.....Cafe Manager
Lois Boyd.....Pretty Girl

Where hearts are free and heads are light

This title introduces a cafe, which is shown in long shot, dancers, etc. Cut to Bothwell Browne and orchestra playing wildly, while Browne the leader is dancing as well as leading.

Cut to

A pretty manicurist and her chiropodist husband

Phyllis Haver and Bert Roach, two of the diners, seated at a table in the foreground. She is enjoying the atmosphere of the place, while Bert is more or less bored, reading a newspaper. Cut to Ford Sterling, an example of

The price of a good time

He has a lamp shade on his head and is in a good-natured state of intoxication. He is admiring Phyllis; cut back to Phyllis, who is apparently winking at him, while Bert is nonchalantly reading his newspaper. Phyllis arranges her hair, getting it out of her eye which had caused her apparent flirtatiousness. Cut to Ford, who thinks Phyllis is flirting with him and that he has made a hit. He takes off the mantelpiece and lays it on the table. Back to close-up of Phyllis, smiling at Ford's antics. He begins to get fancy and does tricks for her benefit. He places a napkin over his finger, holds it up in the air, then takes off the napkin, revealing his finger. Phyllis nods her approval. He shakes his finger at her. He then puts the napkin over his wine glass, removes it from the table and takes the napkin off. The manager, Ed Kennedy, passes by Phyllis' table and she inno-

cently asks him:

"Isn't he funny?"

The manager, thinking she wants an introduction, goes over to Ford and says:

"Meet the folks."

Ford, quite elated, gets up, primps himself a little, and follows the manager over to Phyllis' table where he is introduced to her. Bert refuses to shake hands with him and coolly hands him his card which reads, as shown by insert

**Percival Lavender, Esq.
Apartment A
Powder Apartments**

Ford places it in his pocket and sits down beside Phyllis in the place where Bert had been. Bert is getting pretty sore; he comes over and taps Ford on the shoulder. Ford hands him a piece of change and says:

"Here, run along."

Bert, very sore, throws the money on the floor and stalks off indignantly. Show another shot of Browne and orchestra. Ford and Phyllis do a little dance. Bert is trying to smother his chagrin by drinking at the buffet. He is about to walk away when the bartender reminds him that he has not yet paid for his drink. He pulls out a very miniature purse, extracts a dime therefrom, lays it on the bar, and slowly and reluctantly pulls out another dime, and then a third one. He shoves them towards the bartender and walks off. Ford, evidently believing in the maxim

**Early to bed and early to rise –
And you'll never meet prominent people**

is thoroughly enjoying his fancy dance with Phyllis; in fact, they are so good, the other diners have stopped dancing to watch them. Bert, at the door of the cafe, takes it none too pleased. One of Bert's lady acquaintances passes Bert and laughingly remarks:

"Your wife's having a good time."

Then, noting Bert's peevishness, she remarks sympathetically:

"I know how you feel."

Bert, very sore, walks over to the dance floor where Ford and Phyllis have momentarily stopped dancing and drags Phyllis off. Ford follows them and sits down beside Phyllis in the place Bert had intended taking. Bert gives him a mean look and sits down beside him. Ford urges him:

"Don't be a grouch."

Bert, with an air of injured dignity, gets up and very formally requests Phyllis to dance with him. As he walks off with her, he gives Ford a very mean look. Bert is evidently thinking of the

saying:

Dance and grow thin

for he is a very awkward dancer and steps all over Phyllis' feet. Finally, he trips her and they take a fall on the floor, much to the amusement of the other dancers and diners. In the meantime, Ford is busy scribbling a note to Phyllis. Phyllis is very sore at the embarrassment her husband has caused her and with the sarcastic comment:

"If you want to sit down, get a chair."

As Phyllis sits down opposite him and Bert returns to the table, Ford renews his flirting with Phyllis. He is trying to pass her the note he has written. He gets what he thinks is her hand under the table, although Phyllis' hands are shown resting peacefully on her lap. Bert, who has intercepted the note, now looks at it, and reads, as shown by insert:

Send dirty face home so you and I can play.

Ford is smiling at Phyllis, trying to get some acknowledgement of the receipt of the note, when Bert says grimly:

"I got it."

Then, with his long suppressed rage now at the boiling point, he grabs Ford out of his chair and brings him to the center of the floor. When the manager comes up to quell the disturbance, Bert explains:

"He insulted me and the wife."

They call a policeman who escorts Ford outside. Cut to Ford

Adrift

He is sailing along the sidewalk, swaying from side to side. His overcoat is only half on. He comes to a post and leans against it, trying to get his coat on. In doing so, he winds it around the post, so that when he buttons up his coat, he is held fast to the post. A pretty girl, Lois Boyd, goes by and flirts with him. She goes into another set; he whistles at her. He takes off his hat, bows and tries to follow her, but cannot get away. He says apologetically:

"Somebody's holding me."

She laughs and goes off. A policeman saunters up and releases Ford; evidently Ford is too befuddled to tell him where he lives, so the policeman goes through his pockets and finds Bert's card, reading

**Percival Lavender, Esq.
Apartment A
Powder Apartments**

The policeman naturally concludes this is Ford's address and

starts off with him. Cut back to Bert and Phyllis, in the cloak room of the cafe. Bert, very mad at Phyllis, decides to end it all. He says:

"Go; you'll hear from my lawyer."

Show Phyllis coming down steps at entrance of cafe. Cut to Bert at bar, trying to drown his sorrow. Back to Ford, safely ensconced in Bert's apartment by the policeman, and preparing to make himself at home. He pantomimes taking off his clothes, thinking in his drunken stupor that he is really doing so. He has some difficulty getting his shoes off, finally succeeds and places them in his hat; he crawls into bed, and covers himself up. Phyllis by this time has arrived home. She enters her husband's apartment, sees Ford in the bed, but as his head is covered, thinks it is Bert. She exclaims:

"So, my husband's changed his mind, eh?"

She goes off to her boudoir. Cut to Bert at bar crying, repenting of his harshness to Phyllis. He finally decides to call her up and make up. The bartender hands him a telephone, and he calls up his apartment. Cut to Ford, disturbed by the ringing of the phone, picking it up. Bert asks:

"Can Popsie come home?"

Ford, still somewhat befuddled, answers him curtly:

"Not tonight."

Bert, astounded at finding a man answer the telephone in his own apartment, shouts:

"Oh, heavens me!"

and gets over great rage. Cut to Phyllis in her boudoir manicuring her nails and looking at her reflection in them. Bert arrives home, rushes in, sees somebody in the bed, looks at Ford's hat and slippers, then decides to wait and watch furtively, goes back out through the door, and peers in through door. Phyllis comes into room where Ford is laying on bed. As she does so, she notices the door being opened by Bert, whom she does not see. She takes it in great fright and hollers:

"BURGLARS!"

She gets up and locks the door. Bert, outside, furious, with a gun in his hand, cries, as he pounds vigorously on door:

"Open, or I'll shoot!"

Phyllis, very frightened, goes over to Ford, whom she still thinks is her husband, and arouses him, crying:

"Someone's breaking in, Dear!"

Then, as Ford drowsily sits up, she gets over great astonishment

"O-h-h-h you!"

Then Phyllis turns on Ford and warns him:

"Go, while the going's good!"

In the meantime, she has locked the other door, effectually keeping her husband out. Ford picks up his coat and hat with his shoes in them and sneaks out to the hall to make his getaway. He is caught by Bert in the act, and a chase ensues, through all the apartments. Ford pursued by Bert, who is shooting at him. In his excitement, Bert bumps into...

The wrong man

one of the tenants of the apartment house, and he gets sore, takes the gun from Bert and starts chasing him. In the meantime Ford has run down into the lobby. Phyllis comes into the lobby and greatly frightened, clings to Ford for protection. Bert runs down into the lobby, pursued by the wrong man, but Bert does not dare to stop. Finally, the manager, incensed, comes down to Bert and Phyllis and tells them:

"Pack up and get out!"

They exit to elevator. Ford upstairs, with coat, hat and shoes in hand, is accosted by one of the lady tenants who asks:

"Why so nervous?"

He responds:

"I'm not nervous; I'm just quick."

The manager comes upstairs with a "FOR RENT" sign and admonishes Bert and Phyllis

"Make it fast."

Ford walks nonchalantly by, fully dressed, with baggage in his hand. Bert and Phyllis leave, and manager hangs up sign.

End of Reel One

Reel Two

**In the mountains to forget
Scandal is a matter of geography**

This title introduces Bert and Phyllis arriving at mountain resort. Bert is acquainted with the manager and is talking to him. Cut to Myrtle Lind,

Somebody's fiancée

The manager calls her over and introduces her to Bert and Phyllis, showing them her engagement ring. Bert makes an attempt at gallantry saying:

"When is the fatal -- I mean happy day?"

Ford is over at the desk telephoning. The manager calls him over to introduce him to Bert and Phyllis. He says:

"This is the boy that won her."

Bert, about to shake hands with the supposed stranger, recognizes Ford and gets over great astonishment and rage. He turns to Phyllis and exclaims:

"You knew he was here!"

Phyllis denies it, very much embarrassed, and finally, under Bert's scolding, walks off weeping. Bert goes off into another set and sits down on the knitting needles of an old lady sitting nearby. He takes it, and jumps up very sore, and begins to bawl out the old lady for her carelessness. The old lady is consoling Phyllis. Finally, Bert exits. In the buffet of the resort, some Indians are trying to sneak some booze off the bar. One of the Indians takes off a feather, sticks a piece of gum to the pin end of it and places it on the bar. He puts up his hand groping for the booze. The bartender makes a swipe at the feather, then sees the Indian and hits him over the head with a club. The Indians exit to another set. Bert enters the buffet. He leans over to tie his shoestring, and as he does so, the feather in his Alpine mountain hat is just visible over the top of the bar. The bartender, seeing it, thinks it is the Indians back again, and muttering:

"Back again!"

He picks up his mallet and smacks Bert over the head with it. Bert, very sore, gets up, takes the mallet from him and hits him square in the face with it. In the meantime, Ford enters the buffet and is standing at the bar, ordering a drink. Bert is sitting down at a table. Ford gets his drink and sits on Bert's lap. Bert gets up, sore, and goes off into another set. The Indians sneak down along the bar; Ford calls the bartender's attention to this. One of the Indians reaches up for a bottle of whiskey on the bar, but the bartender has substituted gasoline which he gets. They all drink out of tin cups. As they begin spitting out the nasty tasting gasoline, Ford lights his cigarette and the gasoline catches fire, showing the Indians had imbibed real

Firewater

Ford picks up a siphon of soda water and squirts it at the Indians to quench the blaze. In so doing, he turns the bottle in such a way that the soda water plays on Bert over in another corner, giving him a good drenching. Bert, very sore, comes over to Ford and angrily says:

"You've gone too far!"

He makes a threatening motion to his hip pocket. Ford makes a more vigorous threatening motion to his hip pocket as he slowly backs off toward the entrance. As he gets to the door, he lightly pulls out his handkerchief, waves it gayly at Bert and

mockingly exclaims as he exits:

"Over the river!"

Cut to Bert in another set conversing with the Indians. He points out window; exterior shot of Myrtle in mountain costume. He says to the Indians:

"Kidnap her for an hour."

He gives them some money, but the Indian spokesman still holds out his hand invitingly, saying:

"... and war tax."

Show shot outside of Phyllis entering exterior set, chasing butterflies, Myrtle having exited. The manager comes into Bert's set, and he gets over he is getting revenge on Ford by having Indians kidnap his fiancée. He explains,

"I'm throwing a scare into him."

He goes off to set where Ford is, accosts him in a friendly manner, and with studied casualness, inquires:

"Where's your sweetheart?"

Ford, unaware of the inference, and somewhat surprised at Bert's friendliness, answers easily:

"Oh, she's about."

Just then, Myrtle enters. Bert, astounded, can only ask:

"Weren't you kidnapped?"

Then, it dawns upon him that there has been a mistake made, and that in all probability the Indians have kidnapped Phyllis, his wife, instead of Myrtle. Greatly perturbed, he cries:

"They got my wife."

He rushes out. Cut to exterior set, Indian encampment. The chief and his squaw are doing a shimmy for

Everybody's doing it

The Indians arrive with Phyllis. When they uncover Phyllis, they notice their mistake and tell the chief. The latter, however, is infatuated with Phyllis and will not give her up. Bert, hurrying along the road to the Indian's camp is met by the kidnappers, who tell him:

"The chief likes blondes."

Bert comes to sign reading, "When in trouble, use this." He opens up door and there is a telephone. He phones the hotel, and the clerk notifies guests, who all rush out. Bert comes up

to chief and tells him:

"You got the wrong girl."

The chief looks at him contemptuously, turning up Bert's nose with his finger, and answers:

"I'm satisfied."

Bert, enraged, starts to fight the Indians in an attempt to rescue Phyllis. He knocks down two or three.

GAZAM

Goes after the rest in good fashion, knocking out some more.

GAZUNK!

He runs off and is about to make his get-away when the kidnappers returning to the camp catch him and bring him back to the chief. The chief orders his men:

"Tie the fathead up!"

They tie him to the stake, burning a fire at his feet. In the meantime, Ford and Myrtle have arrived in the vicinity. They are by an old cabin, which they enter. Myrtle finds a Salome costume, and handing them to Ford, she entreats:

"It's the only way to save them."

Ford dons the costume and they exit. As he leaves to go to the camp, Myrtle says:

"Do a Salome, and I'll do the rest."

One of the cross-eyed Indians is shooting apples off Bert's head with a bow and arrow. He does not come anywhere near the apples, but Bert shakes everytime the Indian takes a shot and the apple falls off his head. The chief is entertaining Phyllis in his wigwam, playing on his ukulele and singing. Ford arrives; he has on a hula costume and his face is covered with a veil; he also wears a wig. He goes into his dance for the chief, who is delighted. He is vamping the chief very successfully by his dancing and elusive ways. Myrtle sneaks to tent where Phyllis is, gets her, and as they are making their getaway, Myrtle pantomimes to Ford:

"Great, you got him going."

During Ford's dance, several cuts to Bert with fire at feet, getting over pain. Ford inveigles the chief into a playful chase. He runs off into another set, leans back in seductive attitude when a branch catches his wig and pulls it off. He is still vamping the chief, unaware of his loss, when the cold, hard expression on the chief's face warns him something has gone wrong. He feels for his wig and finds it is gone. He starts running, the chief after him. As he is making his escape up a hill, the Indians lasso him. He is struggling to release the rope, when a bear appears, and choosing the lesser of the two evils, he runs back toward the

camp. The Indians have tied the other end of the rope around Bert's neck; closeups of rope tugging at his neck. Ford, in seeking to evade the bear, encircles stake until he is finally at the end of his rope and secured to the stake with Bert. The bear comes up and lays its paw on Ford's head, while he hollers, in great fright:

"Assistance!"

Bert is also taking it frightened. Ford yells again:

"Help! Mother!"

Cut to cook ringing dinner bell

Lunch

The supposed bear takes off his head, revealing man inside and laughingly remarking:

"Time for the eats!"

The supposed Indians take off their headdress and come to release Ford and Bert. Cut to bushes falling down, revealing hotel guests applauding vigorously, calling:

"Encore! Encore!"

As the Indians come up and release Ford and Bert, they tell them:

"You've been acting."

For the first time, Ford and Bert realize it is a frame-up, and they have been made the goat for the guests' amusement. Ford says:

"We're being kidded."

The manager, Phyllis and Myrtle come up to Ford and Bert. The manager holds out his hand to congratulate them. Cut back to guests crying:

"Great show!"

The manager assures the boys:

"My guests never had a better show!"

Ford and Bert are thoroughly disgusted, and Ford can only remark resignedly:

"The first hundred years are the hardest."

Iris out.

The End

This has been another original cutting continuity script from a rare, lost silent comedy that will hopefully resurface.

Another next issue!



Lloyd Hamilton

A FLYER IN ART

What happened to Lloyd Hamilton, he of the sad expression and the huge feet, in the presence of Art in the awfully refined studio of Mr. Griffith

By Delight Evans

as originally appeared in *Screenland*, November 1923

Kiddies, if ever mama or papa or even your fairy god-mother should say to you, "What motion picture studio would you like to visit today?" why, you just pipe up in your little treble, "Mr. Griffith's." Because, kiddies, you will love it there, and you will be just as safe as if you were in your own little room.

Mr. Griffith's isn't like other studios. It's most awfully refined. There is none of that nasty air of commercialism hanging about the place. Pictures, not money is made there - you feel that.

One doesn't exactly walk softly and talk in whispers, but one feels that one should.

His people refer feelingly to Mr. Griffith as "God's own gentleman," and after you have been there a while you catch yourself murmuring it, too. Anyone who has the good taste to buy a lovely old estate in Mamaroneck, surrounded by Sound and air to make pictures in, is God's own gentleman, and don't you forget it.

In the Presence of Art

One is in the presence of art. Well, no matter what you may have thought of *Way Down East* and *The White Rose*, the memories of such great things as *Broken Blossoms* and *The Birth of a Nation* hover.

Griffith's studio is romantic and picturesque and impractical. Little ladies and gentlemen, every employee. You feel that the stage hands work there only because they love it, and the view is so nice. Every outsider is charmed and impressed. The dwellers in adjacent estates bring their little ones to watch the companies at work. Even if no pictures were made there, it should be preserved as an example of What a Well Bred Studio Should Be, and Too Often, Alas, is Not.

It is always exciting to see the latest addition to the happy family in Mamaroneck. There was Carol Dempster. She looked as if she had been bound for the exclusive school for girls nearby and had wandered in to the film factory by mistake. Charming voice and manners. She played brilliant Chopin between scenes. And Joseph Schildkraut, who talked in melancholy tones of how he wanted to do *Dorian Gray* - I remember he made me want to go right out and see about the scenario. Ivor Novello - ah, Ivor. With the profile that, if it were turned to the camera continually, would make the home fires of our little fans go out. Every one of them belonged.

A Stranger Came Adown the Lane

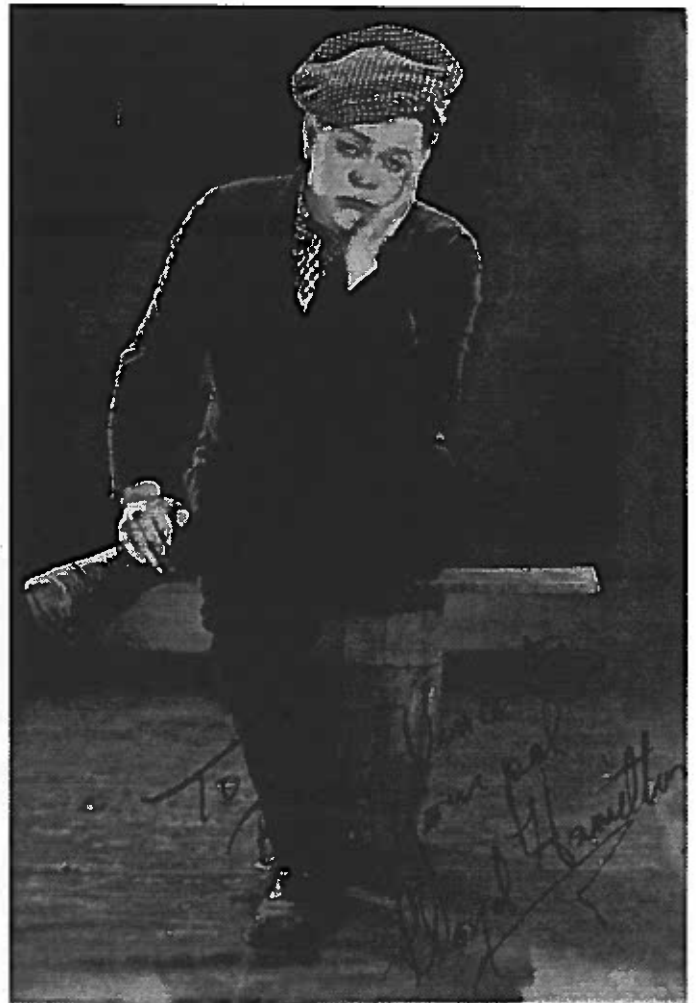
Passed time.

Come, adown the lane, a Stranger.

He loomed a little large after Ivor. His shoes were old, stubby and of an amazing size. He wore a very small checked cap. His suit seemed to shrink even as I gazed.

Next to Lillian Gish, Lloyd Hamilton is probably the wistfullest thing on the screen. Perhaps this is why Griffith chose him for the leading role in *Black and White*, when Al Jolson decided he's rather go to Europe than make a movie.

Lillian and Mae and Carol may look pathetic - but even these illustrious sob-sisters could learn a lot from Lloyd. He seems always to be faintly troubled about something. You yearn to



put your arm around his shoulder and tell him, huskily, that you understand. Comedians are like that, anyway. Whenever I see one off the screen I want to break down and have a good cry. They touch me to the heart. It is as if the strain of being awfully funny all the time had begun to tell.

The Wistful Mr. Hamilton

Like everyone else, Mr. Hamilton has to pinch himself every so often to make sure he is really, truly working for Mr. Griffith. He was making his two-reelers in Hollywood when the wire came asking him to take the lead in *Black and White*. The part is that of a young lawyer who clears his client of a murder charge by masquerading as a resident of darktown and unearthing the real murderer. One of the highlights of the piece is the scene where he participates in the baptismal ceremonies in the river and when ducked by the officiating clergyman, comes up white. Now you know.

While his too-small cap hasn't become a symbol like Harold's glassless goggles, still it is known. Small boys recognize him on the street. So there was something touching in his humility when Hamilton remarked that he was so surprised that Mr. Griffith told him to keep right on wearing the same clothes and pulling the same line. Mr. Griffith even did an imitation of the Hamilton walk - imagine. You know the character if you saw *Uneasy Feet*. A man who wants everyone to think he is going somewhere when he really isn't going anywhere at all. Circumstances over which he has no control make him funny.

The Intensely Serious Lloyd Bacon

Lloyd Bacon, the son of the late star of *Lightnin'*, and Jack Noble, director, are other Californians working on *Black and White*. Mr. Bacon is an intensely serious young man. Kate Price remembered him when he was eight and she was a member of his father's company, and she said he was oh, so serious then. Mr. Bacon looked at me and said, "Have you ever been to California?"

"No," I acknowledged humbly.

Mr. Bacon bent upon me a look of awful scorn.

Perhaps there was pity in it.

He walked away and I could hear whispers, "She's never been to California?"

I felt suspicion grow about me. Contempt. But not from Lloyd Hamilton.

A real heart beats beneath his rough slapstick exterior. He said he had known someone, once, a long time ago, who had never been further west than Kansas City; and he understood it was possible to live quite happily in the East.

"It isn't like California, of course," he added. "Seems funny to be riding to location here in the studio bus." There was a far-away look in his large eyes. Undoubtedly he had a vision of himself riding to location in California, himself and his large shoes and his make-up box filling his own car.

Still Recalls His Past

If he yearns for the great west he doesn't show it. Neither, however, does he attempt to smother his past.

He admits he was *Ham* of *Ham and Bud*, in the days when Mickey Neilan was with Kalem.

"We thought we were real funny, then." His short comedies for Educational have brought him into favor. Remember his shoe-store scenes in *Uneasy Feet*? He's trying on shoes and everytime the clerk asks him if he likes a pair, the feather in the hat of the lady sitting behind him tickles his ear and he shakes his head. Six hundred pairs of shoes were used in this one scene alone. Only Cecil B. DeMille could break this record.

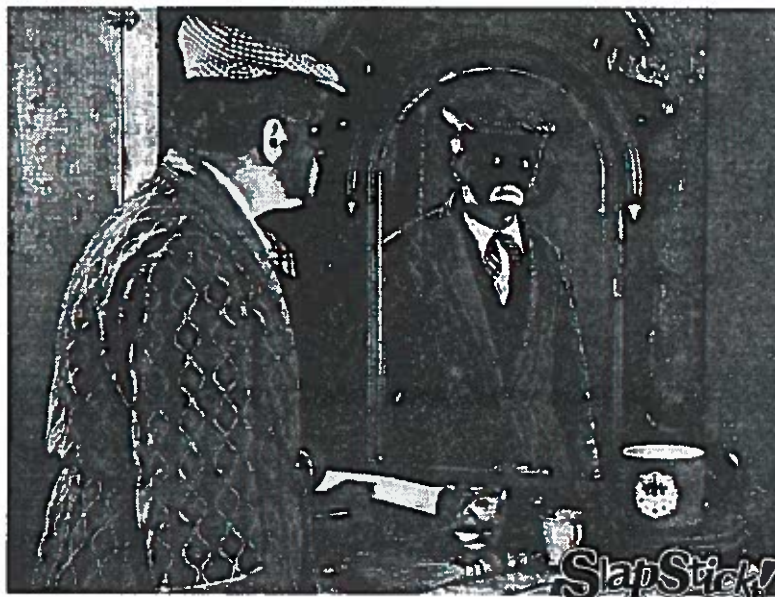
Hamilton is an old trouser. He had his training in repertoire. He's been in pictures ever since they used to make one a week, or oftener. He has worked with lions and would rather work with anything else. He assures the skeptical, rather feelingly, that the lions he worked with - I think it was in *Roaring Lions* and *Wedding Bells* - had untrimmed claws, youth, and full possession of all their ivories.

Homesick for Old, Low Comedy

Perhaps his wistful look is really a martyr expression, occasioned by homesickness for Hollywood and his good, old, low comedy. If so, he suffers in a worthy cause. It is for art. *Black and White* has its solemn moments when Hamilton will be required to act, even as Schildkraut and Novello. How will it feel to go back to the old life, making two-reelers without any solemn moments? Will he decide that all true comedy has a touch of pathos and proceed to put it in? At any rate, come what will, he can always lift his head proudly and say, "I worked for Griffith."

He hasn't Schildkraut's profile, but I like him better.

Editor's note: The Hamilton film the author spoke of, *Black and White*, was eventually released March 16, 1924 as the five reel feature, *His Darker Self*. According to Richard Roberts in his fine Hamilton biography for *Griffithiana*, May/Sept 1992, "(D.W.) Griffith, disheartened after Jolson's departure, lost interest in the film, turning it over to his producer/brother-in-law, Albert Grey, and a new director, Jack Noble." Directed by Noble, story "Mammy's Boy" by Arthur Caesar, and titles by Ralph Spence, the cast included Tom Wilson, Tom O'Malley, Lucille LaVerne, Irma Washington, Edna May Sperl, Warren Cook, Sally Long, Kate Bruce, and Lloyd Hamilton as *Claude Sappington*. Fortunately (or unfortunately) only a two-reel condensation survives at this time.



LARRY SEMON

HOW MANY TIMES DID HE DIE?

An Investigation Into the Possibility of a Faked Death

By Claudia Sassen



This article reports inconsistencies with the biography of silent film comedian Lawrence "Larry" Semon – the result of many years of research¹. Frequently, Larry has been subject of more or less credible stories such as his outright hostility towards Stan Laurel [37, 38] which was believed to emerge from Larry's inability to share the screen with another talented artist [35]. Conjectures about Larry Semon's death are of quite a different calibre. They have produced much gossip, enough to supply legions of script writers with new ideas.

Recently, it has been discussed whether Larry Semon did in fact prematurely die from tubercular pneumonia or whether his end had been what became one of the prevailing features of his films: fakery, or a neatly-planned construction. Both variants are backed by information from documents, interviews and newspaper clippings. It is clearly too late to reconstruct exactly what happened, but a critical commentary based on this information limits the possibilities. For Larry Semon, there would have been reason enough to disappear: In March 1928, he feels obliged to file bankruptcy. A high-flying lifestyle and financial flops have left him with debts amounting to \$500,000 [5, 22]. Since his reserves are nil, he agrees with his debtors that he will undertake another vaudeville tour to pay them back [7]. The tour comes to an abrupt end when Semon suffers a nervous breakdown in early August 1928 [29].

In 1996, the talking starts: Larry Semon may not have died on October 8th, 1928, but instead faked his death. Rumors lead back to researcher Steve Rydzewski, who conducted a search for Semon's death certificate via the Sacramento Board of Vital Statistics. Despite refined search criteria including an extensive search interval up to 1931 and accounting for various spellings of Larry's names the situation does not improve². It seems Larry Semon's death certificate does not exist.

In January 1999 the certificate unexpectedly turns up. Robert Dickson of Los Angeles starts a search in San Bernadino, California, the county where Larry died, and is immediately successful. Apparently, Steve picked the wrong office for his search. This is not to say that he based his hypothesis only on a death certificate he believed to be never filed.

¹ Thank you Bob Dickson, Alison Grimmer, Judy Hall, Glenn Mitchell, Steve Rydzewski and Chris Seguin for your kind and untiring assistance.

² Steve Rydzewski, personal communication, see also [36].

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California State Board of Health
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
ORIGINALS PERTAINING TO DEATH

Local Registrar No. 30

Word: (To be filled in by the local registrar)

DEATH CERTIFICATE

1. Name of Deceased: **LARRY SEMON**

2. Date of Death: **Oct 7, 1936**

3. Place of Death: **San Francisco, Cal.**

4. Cause of Death: **Heart Disease**

5. Age: **29**

6. Sex: **Male**

7. Race: **White**

8. Birth Date: **Oct 8, 1906**

9. Birth Place: **San Francisco, Cal.**

10. Father's Name: **Larry Semon**

11. Mother's Name: **Dorothy Smith**

12. Signature of Registrar: **R.T. Rich**

13. Signature of Medical Officer: **Dr. [illegible]**

14. Signature of Coroner: **[illegible]**

15. Signature of Undertaker: **[illegible]**

16. Signature of Burial Place: **[illegible]**

17. Signature of Crematorium: **[illegible]**

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Larry Semon's lost death certificate FOUND!

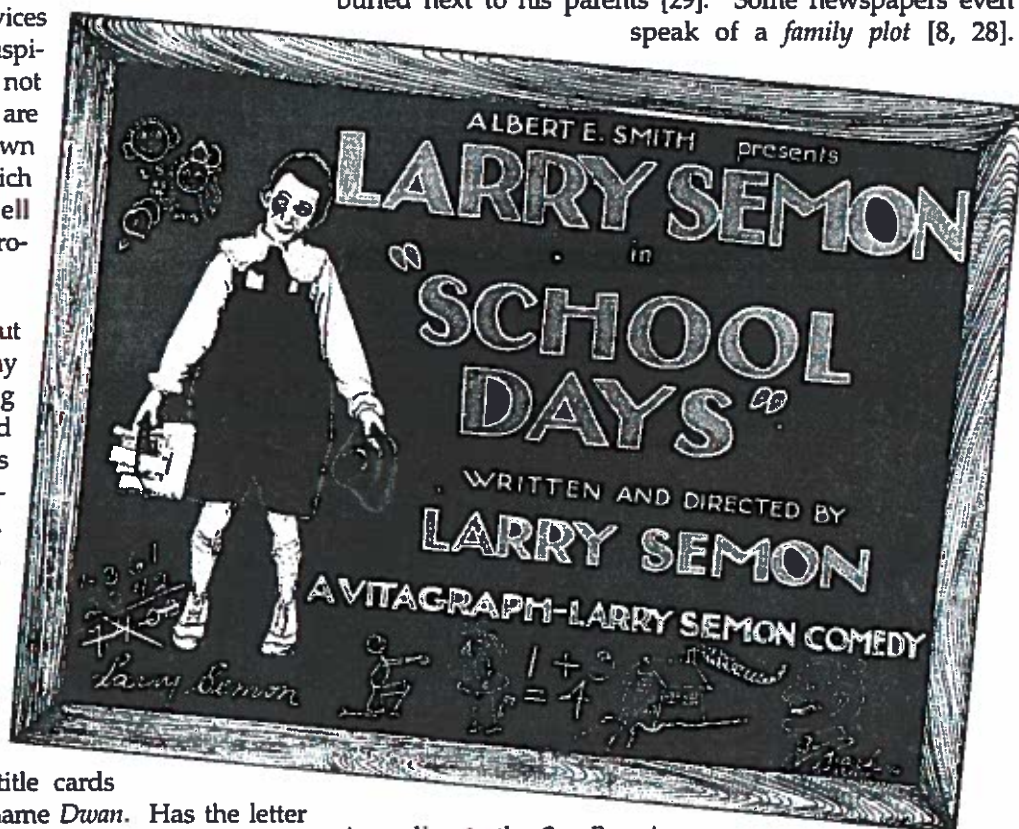
Conclusions he draws from news reports on Larry's funeral services and interment may maintain suspicions of a death that was perhaps not genuine [36]. Steve's findings are discussed and extended by my own results of research. Remarks which seem improbable are as well brought forward in order to provide food for thought.

- The registrar R.T. Rich fills out the death certificate. Dorothy Dwan, who is with Larry during his final hours, is mentioned twice: as Larry's widow and as informant, providing the personal data of her deceased spouse. She was born Dorothy Smith. Dwan being her artist name she assumed in the course of her career. However, Rich inserts the name Dawn. The letters *a* and *w* of the pseudonym are reversed. By contrast, press releases, newspaper ads and title cards without exception display the name Dwan. Has the letter mix-up been intended by Dorothy in order to detach herself from the Dorothy mentioned in the certificate? Or was it created due to imperfect hearing or a writing mistake? Or is Dawn Dorothy's second Christian name?

- Private funeral rights are held for Larry. In order not to

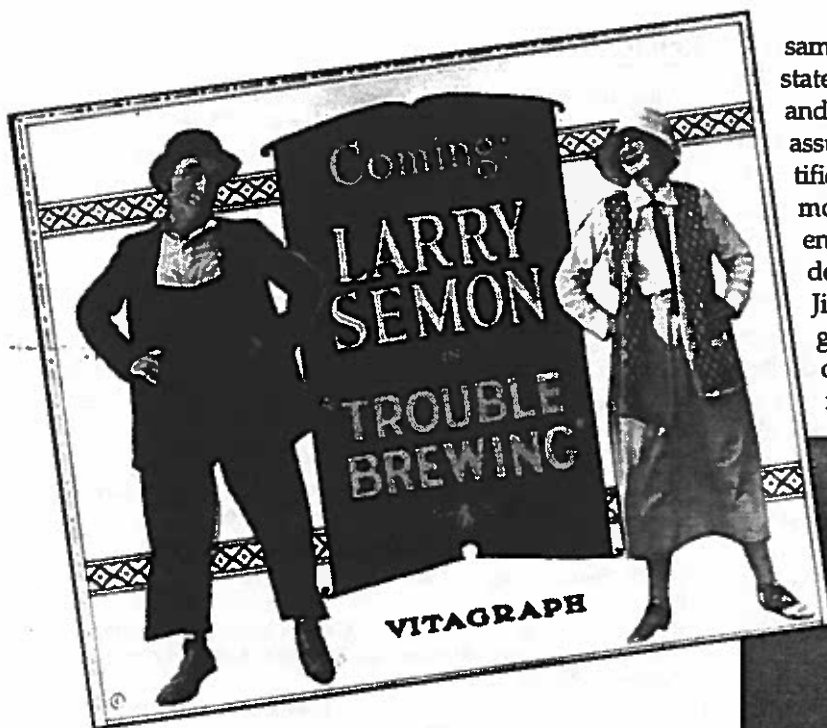
further burden Dorothy, who is close to collapsing, only six persons are allowed to participate in the ceremony at the mausoleum of the Mountain View Cemetery: Dorothy, her mother Mrs. Nancy Smith, Charles Sollars, Nancy's new husband, a Christian Science reader, her assistant, and R.T. Rich, this time as undertaker [4, 16, 24, 29]. More than a dozen friends, among them Snub Pollard and probably Babe Hardy, convene outside the mausoleum. The contemporary press does not reveal whether they get permission to pay Larry their last respects [9]. According to the *New York Times*, access is denied [26]. The *Los Angeles Times*, however, states that the doors are opened after the ceremony [8]. Maybe the reporter for the *New York Times* left too early. It remains unclear whether Larry's body is laid out. The place and time of the ceremony are kept secret [16]. Among the newspaper articles available, only the *San Francisco Chronicle* publishes the dates in advance [11].

- Nationwide obituaries contradict each other with regard to the location of Larry's grave: The *Los Angeles Times* reports that Larry's body is transported to Philadelphia to be buried next to his parents [29]. Some newspapers even speak of a family plot [8, 28].



According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Semon is cremated and afterwards sent to

* It would be helpful to consult Dorothy's birth certificate on the matter, but this was not available while this article was being written. According to Steve Rydzewski, in a web document about Larry and Dorothy's wedding, the name Dorothy Belle Ilgenfritz occurs. Ilgenfritz is the name of her father [34] and presumably Belle her second Christian name.



Philadelphia [11]. *La Opinion* believes Larry's body to be in a mausoleum in Hollywood next to once famous actors Barbara La Marr and Rudolph Valentino [6]. Another source places Larry's ashes in Arrowhead, California⁴. According to majority opinion, Larry is buried in Philadelphia. A sister making Philadelphia her home would support this view as well⁵ [9, 24, 29]. The death certificate contains the note *cremat. for cremation*. Yet, there is no information given for the place of interment.

- Rydzewski, who resides in Philadelphia, has, of this writing, been unable to find Larry's grave or a Semon family plot⁶. In California the search for Larry's grave has also failed⁷. Research is made difficult by the confusing information about Larry's faith. If the film magazine *Photoplay* is right, Larry comes from an old family of New England Quakers [3]. However, a Christian Science reader was present at the ceremony. Provided, if Larry was buried near his parents, he would find himself in a Jewish cemetery in West Philadelphia⁸. Another clue would be his immediate interment. Strange enough, though, Larry's cremation. For Jewish people it is as unusual as a family plot. Solitary graves are normal. They are simple, the only accessory being a tomb stone.

- Searching for members of Larry Semon's family, I met Judy Hall. From what she tells me about their family the question arises whether Larry had a readiness to act against the law. Until 1978 Judy is married to Jim Semon, a universal genius and expert in the art of living, who shares the

same nose and ears as Larry Semon. The same can be stated for their son, Damian, as proved by photographs and video footage she puts at my disposal. Judy assumes that Larry Semon is Jim's great-uncle. She justifies her assumption by the *Semon-gene* as she and Jim's mother call it. The *Semon-gene* kids push the proverbial envelope. They are highly talented, creative, but wanderers with a compulsive desire to live on the edge. Jim's father regularly files for bankruptcy. A court goes so far as to deem him incompetent to handle his own finances. Before meeting Judy, Jim makes a living as a criminal. A master forger he is never caught



red-handed as he portrays different characters to pass stolen checks. He poses as a mechanic, a doctor, a lawyer. He is also an excellent narrator and becomes an accomplished jazz musician who sits in with Dizzy Gillespie and plays congas. Damian Semon, eloquent and convincing, exhibits an enormous gift as a performer and gets an opportunity to study with the *Second City* comedy troupe in Chicago⁹. Jim's grandfather, apparently the closest relative to Larry Semon, is shot in a bar fight in Texas, but survives. Jim Semon, however, is not meant to survive. Reinvolved in the drug scene, he is murdered in 1984.

⁴ Judy Hall, personal communication.

⁵ Obituaries mention a Mrs. H.C. Cunningham. The initials may be her husband's.

⁶ Steve Rydzewski, personal communication.

⁷ Alison Grimmer, personal communication.

⁸ Cp. The obituary of Larry's father, Zera Semon.

⁹ *Second City* has produced major stars many of which went on to star on the television show, *Saturday Night Live*.

It remains a mystery where Jim's clan has to be placed in Larry Semon's family tree. Maybe the reader can help find the link. Apart from striking resemblances concerning the looks which go as far as the torso, there seems to be a kinship when it comes to financial mannerisms and artistic talents in particular: Not only was Larry a first-class actor, he also reveals high musicality³⁰ and shows great talent as author, acrobat, conjurer, cartoonist and sportsman; abilities which would help create a new identity. It is hard to judge how particular Semon was about the law. At least, he does not refrain from evading taxes of many thousands of dollars [33, 40] and is not afraid of provoking Vitagraph to sue him for causing heavy financial damages [1, 2]. Institutions like the FBI do not hold records on Larry Semon.

- It takes some people in order to fake a death. At least the persons present at the ceremony would have to be involved in the *Semon-plot*. One of them, Nancy Smith, who was a magazine writer by profession [9]. Perhaps it was she who controlled the information about Larry's stay at the sanatorium which was regularly released to the press. Does she formulate the development of an illness that does not take place? The description of Semon's condition seems exaggerated. It ranges from a psycho-physical breakdown complicated by stomach trouble, to double-sided pneumonia, to tuberculosis [23]. In addition, the bulk of newspaper articles touches upon Dorothy's acting career. Maybe a welcome publicity stunt, since a major breakthrough is miles away. Interpretations like these are neutralized by witnesses such as photographs and film. Deep nose-to-mouth lines suggest Larry as a person with permanent stomach trouble if not constantly undermined health. Pressures executed by the film industry, nagging perfectionism and his frustration about the tremendous failures of his projects destroy him. His final screen appearances feature a *burnt-out* Larry. Worries have left their mark. His eyes empty, his movements helpless, his antics worn-out. Irrevocably?

This is all I can state about what has to do with Larry Semon's death. I am not in the position to take a clear decision whether Larry did die as early as 1928 or if there was indeed a plot and Larry lived on for many years. My research is far from being complete. Maybe as soon as tomorrow somebody will be able to prove or silence all suspicions.

Claudia Sassen

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Since Claudia's completion of this article, I have recently located the burial place of Larry's father, Zera Semon, which was the former Beth El Emeth Cemetery, which was "Jewish Grounds" at 55th & Market Streets in West Philadelphia. It is now a historic site owned and maintained by Mikveh Israel Congregation of Philadelphia. The search continues for Larry's burial site, which we hope to find by our next issue of Slapstick!

...SteveR

³⁰ As a 12-year-old Larry wins the gold medal in a singing contest and decides to become an opera singer. An injury would soon shatter his hopes [39].

Larry Semon Films and their Foreign Titles

Compiled by Claudia Sassen

A Quick-Reference Guide To Larry Semon's Nicknames:

Argentina: Agapito
Austria: Zigotto
Catalonia: Jaimito
Czechoslovakia: Larry
France: Zigoto, Bigorno
Germany: Larry Semon/Zigotto(?)
Hungary: Zigoto
Mexico: Narizotas
Portugal: Joãozinho, Josésito
Spain: Tomásín
Suisse: Fridolini

Larry Semon Films and their Foreign Titles

This filmography lists all titles of Semon films¹ which are named by the copyright & release synopses of the Special Collections-URL UCLA¹⁸. The original titles are juxtaposed with the titles of foreign cinema & television releases. Foreign titles were taken from film copies, early film magazines^{1,11,14}, film books^{4,10,12,13}, & lists released by Italian & German boards of censor^{4,17}. The foreign versions were identified by viewing films, consulting archivists, synopsis, intertitle lists & programs of retrospectives^{2A9}.

Underscored titles are versions known to be extant. When the original version is known to be extant, an asterisk has been placed after the title. Release dates with a question mark were taken from Davide Turconi's Semon filmography¹⁷, as some sheets from the Vitagraph files didn't have dates. Wherever a foreign title could not unequivocally be assigned, a questionmark (?) is placed.

As foreign distributors had the tendency to cling to the same semantic field when renaming Semon films it is tempting to reconstruct original titles by inference. Evidently *Pluck and Plotters* was named in France, Italy, Catalonia & Germany for the spies occurring in it. However, an identification method like this is prone to lead to fallacies as for instance the German titles *Larry der Kulissenschieber* & *Larry Semon als Kulissenschieber* denote completely different films, i.e. *The Show & Between the Acts*, respectively.

If not marked otherwise, the cast list was compiled according to the information in the release & copyright files & by viewing films. Inconsistencies in spelling were adapted deliberately.

Abbreviations

V = Verleih, distribution for German cinemas of the Twenties

S = Slapstick, TV series

MoN = Männer ohne Nerven, German TV series of the 1970's

K = Klamottenkiste, German TV series of the 1980's

LS = Let's Smile, American TV series(?)

BR = Bayerischer Rundfunk (Bavarian radio and television)

An exception made *Special Delivery* with Eddie Cantor, but see² and *His First False Hare*³

1916 One-reel Comedies

Tubby Turns the Tables

re: March 3, 1916
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughie Mack (*Tubby*), Adele de Garde (*Stenographer*), Bert Binns (*First Crook*), Billy Whittlesly (*Banker*)

Terry's Tea Party

re: April 28, 1916
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: George McManus
prod: Vitagraph
cast: John T. Kelly (*Father*), Kate Price (*Mother*), Jewell Hunt (*Daughter*), Doc Donohue (*Count*), Lawrence Semon (*Valet*), James McCabe (*Dinty*), Hughey Mack (*Son*)

Out Ag'In, In Ag'In

re: May 12, 1916; reissued March 22, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon (?)
auth: George McManus
prod: Lawrence Semon
cast: John T. Kelly (*Father*), Kate Price (*Mother*), Jewell Hunt (*Daughter*), Hughey Mack (*Tubby*), Donald McBride (*Burglar*)

More Money Than Manners

re: May 19, 1916
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: John T. Kelly (*P. Oodles*), Kate Price (*Mrs. Oodles*), Jewell Hunt (*Lucille Oodles*), Templar Saxe (*The Duke de Luxe*), Genevieve Russell (*Duchess de Luxe*), Hughey Mack (*Hector McMush*)

The Battler*

re: May 26, 1916
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughie Mack (*Battler*), Edward Dunn (*The Champ*), Billy Baxter (*The Villain*), Claire McCormick (*The Girl*), Danny Hayes (*The Trainer*), Doc Donohue (*The Crook*)

Losing Weight

re: June 30, 1916; reissued April 12, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*Hughey*), Jewell Hunt (*Jewell*), John Flatow (*Mr. Smith*)

The Man From Egypt

re: July 14, 1916; reissued May 10, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker

prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Hughey*), Jewell Hunt (*Jewell Moneybags*),
 John Flatow, Kate Price, William Shea

A Jealous Guy

re: July 28, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Hughey Hunk*), Jewell Hunt (*Mrs. Winsome, his sister*), Billy Baxter (*Wildo Winsome, her wedding gift*),
 Edward Dunn (*Butler*), Vica Raymana (*Maid*)

Romance and Rough House

re: August 11, 1916; reissued May 17, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Hefty Hughie*), Patsy de Forrest (*Romantic Rena*), William Shea (*Her Father*), Edward Dunn (*Lieutenant of the Black Hoodwinkers*), Pierre Colosse (*Big Chief of the "Hoods"*)

There and Back

re: August 11, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Hughie Homer*), Patsy De Forrest (*Mrs. Homer*), Frank Kingsley (*Hen Pecke*), Alice Mann (*Mrs. Hen Pecke*), Edward Dunn (*John Dubo*), Ethel Corcoran (*Mrs. John Dubo*), Josephine Earle (*The She Detective*), Harry Hammil (*Hank Hardrug*)



Larry Semon and his early collaborator, C. Graham Baker

A Villainous Villain

re: September 8, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack, Patsy De Forrest, William Shea, Harry Hammill, Edward Dunn

Love and Loot/An Amateur at Heart

re: September 15, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack (*The Hero*), Patsy De Forrest (*The Heroine*), William Shea (*Her Father*), Edward Dunn (*The Crook*), Frank Brule (*The Burglar*)

Sand Scamps and Strategy

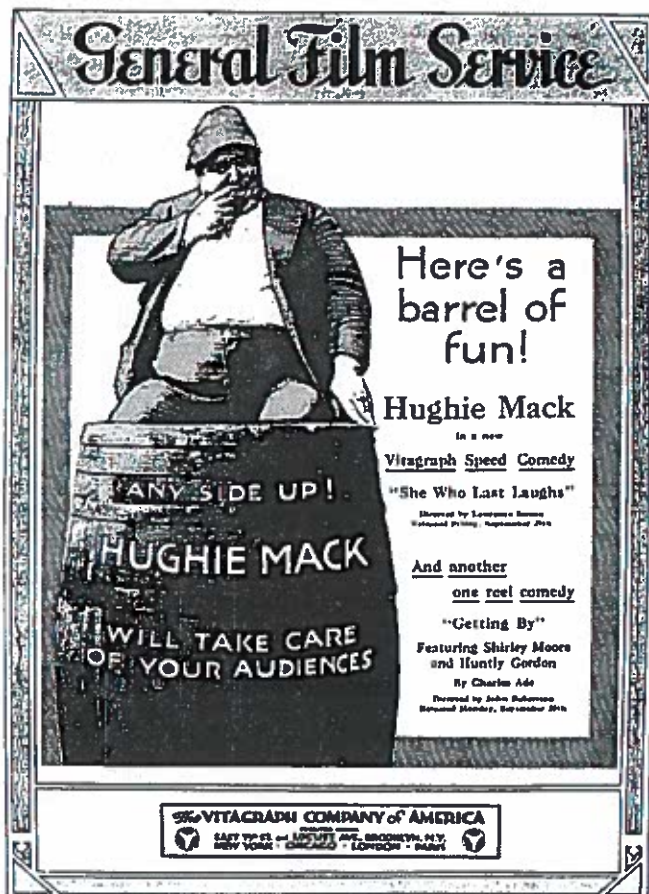
re: September 22, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Percy Pickles*), Patsy De Forrest (*Little Nell*), Edward Dunn (*Crafty Casper*), William Shea (*Father*)

She Who Last Laughs

re: September 29, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Lawrence Semon
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Spencer Spunk*), William Shea (*I.M. Wealthy*), Cathryn Palmar (*Ruth Sleuth*)

Walls and Wallops

re: November 13, 1916
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Graham Baker and Lawrence Semon
 prod: Lawrence Semon (?)
 cast: Hughey Mack (*Police Sergeant*), William Shea (*Chief*), Patsy De Forrest (*His Daughter*), Ed Dunn (*The Villain*)



Jumps and Jealousy

re: November 20, 1916; reissued May 31, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*The Masher*), Patsy De Forrest (*The Mashee*), James Aubrey (*Her Husband*)

His Conscious Conscience

re: November 27, 1916
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon
cast: Hughey Mack (*Hughey McTurbs*), Patsy De Forrest (*Patsy Darling*), Harry Hammil (*Old Man Darling*), Ed Dunn (*Thief*)

Hash and Havoc

Dickie und Wampo, die Schwergewichtler* (*Germany*)
Bouboule Cuisinier (?) (*France*)
re: Dec. 4, 1916; reissued April 19, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*The Chef*), Patsy De Forrest (*The Cashier*), James Aubrey (*The Boss*), Ed Dunn and Frank Brule (*The Waiters*)

Rah! Rah! Rah!

re: December 11, 1916; reissued May 24, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*Our Brave Hero*), Patsy De Forrest (*Our College Widow*), James Aubrey (*Our Jealous Rival*)

Help! Help! Help!

re: December 18, 1916; reissued March 15, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*Lifesaver*), Patsy De Forrest (*The Girl*), William Shea (*Mr. Henpeck*), Nellie Anderson (*Mrs. Henpeck*), Ed Dunn (*Mr. Hubby*), Adele De Garde (*Mrs. Hubby*)

Shanks and Chivalry

re: December 25, 1916; reissued May 3, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Lawrence Semon(?)
cast: Hughey Mack (*Ye Lover*), Patsy De Forrest (*Ye Princess*), William Shea (*Ye King*), Jim Aubrey (*Ye Prime Minister*), Ed Dunn (*Ye Lieutenant*), Vida Ramon (*Ye Lady-in waiting*)

1917

Speed and Spunk

re: January 1, 1917; reissued March 29, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughey Mack (*The Bachelor*), James Aubrey (*The Husband*), Patsy De Forrest (*The Wife*)

Bears and Bullets/Bullies and Bullets

re: January 8, 1917; reissued April 5, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughey Mack (*Him*), Patsy De Forrest (*Her*), James Aubrey (*A Person*)

Jolts and Jewelry

re: January 15, 1917; reissued December 29, 1919
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughey Mack (*Bunco Charley*), James Aubrey (*Slippery Ike*), Alice Mann ? (*Miss Glitters*), Pa Glitters, *The Duke*, Crooks, Cops, etc?

Big Bluffs and Bowling Balls

Jeux de Quilles (*France*)
re: January 22, 1917; reissued December 22, 1919
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: James Aubrey (*One Bluff*), Hughey Mack (*Another Bluff*), John Costello (*Father*), Alice Mann (*His Offspring*)

Somewhere In Any Place

re: January 29, 1917; reissued December 15, 1919
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph (according to Motion Picture News and another page in the release file: Lawrence Semon)
cast: Hughey Mack (*Capt. S. Service*), Alice Mann (*His Stenographer*), James Aubrey (*Mr. "X," A Spy*)

Rips and Rushes

re: February 5, 1917; reissued January 26, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: James Aubrey (*His Lordship*), Hughey Mack (*Vernon Rastle*), Alice Mann (*Girlye*), John Costello (*Her old man*), Joe Simberg, Earl Montgomery, Pietro Aramondo, Murray Simberg, Edward Dunn

He Never Touched Me

re: February 12, 1920; reissued February 16, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: James Aubrey (*A crafty lawyer*), Hughey Mack (*A week(!)-knead husband*), Alice Mann (*His wife*), Hattie Delaro (*Her strong-jawed mother*)

Cops and Cussedness

re: February 19, 1917; reissued February 2, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Hughey Mack (*The Pride of the Force*), James Aubrey (*Oliver Otibun*), Patsy De Forrest (*Cook*), Edward Dunn (*First Cop*), Jack O'Hara (*Second Cop*)



Jimmy Aubrey

Masks and Mishaps

re: February 26, 1917; reissued Mar 8, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*A much married man*), Vivian Marshall (*His jealous wife*), Ed Dunn (*A bill poster*), Billie Leslie (*His Dame*), Virginia De Lillies (*The countess*)

Guffs and Gunplay

re: March 5, 1917; reissued January 19, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*Black Ike*), Ed Dunn (*Sheriff Dawson*), Josephine West (*The Gal?*)

Pests and Promises*

Mein Sohn, der Bürgermeister (MoN) (Germany)
 re: March 12, 1917; reissued February 19, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*The Mayor*), Edward Dunn (*The Boss*), Dorothy Armstrong (*The Girl*)

Footlights and Fakers

re: March 19, 1917; reissued December 8, 1919
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*Props*, on reissue sheet: *Jim*), Edward Dunn (*Grips*, on reissue sheet: *Ed*), Dorothy Armstrong (*Leading Lady*, on the reissue sheet this role is assigned to *Alice Mann*), Joseph Simberg (*Her husband*)

Turks and Troubles*

re: March 26, 1917; reissued December 1, 1919
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: Jimmy Aubrey (*A Soldier of Fortune*, on reissue sheet: *Jim*), Edward Dunn (*Huffed, the Terrible Turk*), Dorothy Armstrong (*The American Girl*, on reissue sheet role is assigned of *Alice Mann*), addition on reissue sheet: Joe Rock and Earle Montgomery (*The other two*)

Dubs and Dry Goods

re: April 2, 1917; reissued February 9, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*The Boss*), Ed Dunn (*The Shipping Clerk*), Joe Simberg (*The Shoplifter*), The "Big V" Riot Squad

Flatheads and Flivvers

Tetes de Bois (?) (France)
 re: April 9, 1917; reissued January 5, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*IMA Crook*), Ed Dunn (*A. Boob*), Harry Deroy (*Bing Bangs*), Nina Trask (*Bissie Bangs*)

Bombs and Blunders

re: April 16, 1917; reissued March 1, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*Timothy Oogle*), Nina Trask (*Helen Truelove*), Ed Dunn (*Jack, her sweetheart*), The "Big V" Riot Squad

Hazards and Homeruns

re: April 23, 1917; reissued January 12, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*Gideon Glassarm*), Ed Dunn (*Nat Twirler*, *Rival Captain*), Dan Duffy (*IMA Bugg, a baseball fan*), Dorothy Armstrong (*Sadie Bugg, his daughter*), Frank Alexander (*Heezya Tonn, a catcher*)

Boasts and Boldness

Fridolen Ha Buon Cuore (Italy)
 re: August 6, 1917
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Greater Vitagraph
 cast: Jimmy Aubrey (*Jim*), Lawrence Semon (*Villain*)

Worries and Wobbles

re: August 13, 1917; reissued June 7, 1920
 dir: Lawrence Semon
 auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
 prod: Vitagraph
 cast: James Aubrey (*Wandering Boy*), Joe Simberg, Earl Montgomery, Pietro Aramondo, Ed Dunn

Shells and Shivers

re: August 20, 1917; reissued April 26, 1920
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon, Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: James Aubrey (*Major Life Miserable*), Ed Dunn (*General D. Bility*), Lillian Mann (*The girl spy*)

Chumps and Chances

re: August 27, 1917; reissued October 14, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*Comedian/Harold*), Jewell Hunt (*Girl*), Jules Cowles (*Father*), Nellie Anderson (*Old maid*), Joe Simberg and Earle Montgomery (*Cops*)

Gall and Golf*

Irrtum mit dem Eigentum (MoN) (*Germany*)
Danish copy extant (no title)
re: September 3, 1917; reissued October 14, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*O.U. Dubb*), Florence Curtis (*Girl crook*), Earle Montgomery, Templer Saxe, Donald MacBride and Joe Simberg (*Other Dubbs*)

Slips and Slackers

Ridolini Soldato (*Italy*)
re: September 10, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*The Slacker*), Nellie Anderson (*The Bride*), Harry Hammil (*The General*), "Big V" Riot Squad: Joe Basil, Earle Montgomery, Joe Simberg, Charles O'Brien, Doc Donohoe, Murray Simberg, Pete Armondo

Risks and Roughnecks*

Ridolini nelle Cave (?) (*Italy*)
re: September 17, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (*The boy*), Florence Curtis (*The girl*), "Big V" Riot Squad: Earle Montgomery, Joe Simberg, Joe Basil, Pedro Aromando

Plans and Pajamas*

re: September 24, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Florence Curtis (*The girl*), Lawrence Semon (*The idler*)

Plagues and Puppy Love

Zigoto Amoureux (*France*)
Ridolini Tenace Innamorato (?) (*Italy*)
Tomasín Conquistador (*Spain*)
re: October 1, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Florence Curtis (*Florence*), Larry Semon (*Larry*)

Sports and Splashes*

*Schmalzlocken-Ede** (MoN, together with *Guns and Greasers*) (*Germany*)
re: October 6 or 8, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*The luckless one*), Florence Curtis (*The dancer*), "Big V" Riot Squad: Earle Montgomery, Joe Simberg, Joe Basil, Pietro Aramondo, Harry Cooper, "Big V" Beauty Squad

Tough Luck and Tin Lizzies

Les Joies de l'Auto (*France*)
re: October 22, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Larry Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (*Larry*), Florence Curtis (*Florence*)

Roughtough and Rooftops*

Zigotto als Detektiv (may be Austrian release) (*Germany*)
Ridolini e la Cassaforte (*Italy*)
re: November 5, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon and Graham Baker
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (*The Janitor*), Earle Montgomery (*Monty*), Joe Rock (*Joe*), Florence Curtis (*The girl*), "Big V" Riot Squad: Joe Simberg, Joe Basil, Pietro Aramondo, Ed Dunn

Spooks and Spasms

re: December 3, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (*Larry*), Florence Curtis (*The girl*), "Big V" Riot Squad: Pedro Aromando, Joe Basil, Al Rush, Tom O'Brien, James Brennon

Noisy Naggers and Nosey Neighbors

re: December 17, 1917
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*Larry*), Florence Curtis, Madge Darrell, Pete Aromando, Leo Hayes

1918

Guns and Greasers*

Schmalz locken-Ede (MoN, together with *Sports and Splashes*) (*Germany*)
re: January 28, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (*Simp*)

Babes and Bombs/Babes and Boobs (in copyright file)

Ridolini Sposo Felice/Ridolini Papà (?) (*Italy*)
re: February 11, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (*A Boob*)

Rooms and Rumors*

Der Kufl auf die Fußsohle (MoN, together with Rummies and Razors) (Germany)
re: February 25, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (I.M. Insensible)

Meddlers and Moonshiners

Zigoto et les Contrebandiers(?) (France)
Ridolini e i Contrabbandieri (?) (Italy)
re: March 11, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Larry Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Simple Oswald)

Stripes and Stumbles*

Fesselnde Liebe (MoN, together with Dunces and Dangers) (Germany)
Ridolini Galeotto per Forza (Italy)
re: March 26, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (Larry), Madge Kirby (The girl), assisted by Frank Alexander, Joe Basil, Owen Evans, Mortimer Peebles

Rummies and Razors*

Der Kufl auf die Fußsohle (MoN, together with Rooms and Rumors) (Germany)
re: April 8, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Larry)

Whistles and Windows

Ridolini e la Sartoria per Signora (Italy)
re: April 22, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Oswald), Madge Kirby (Madge) — Larry obviously also impersonates another character: in an Italian copy available for viewing this is a Russian Duchess (C.S.) —

Spies and Spills

Ridolini e il Cannone (Italy)
re: May 13, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Larry), Madge Kirby (Madge)

Romans and Rascals*

Den Falske Caesar (Denmark)
Zigoto Empereur Romain (France)
Ridolini Caesar Imperatore(?), Carriera di Ridolini(?) (Italy)
re: May 27, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (Caesar and a minstrel), Madge Kirby

(Cleopatra), Pete Aromando, Owen Evans, Frank Alexander, Paul Rondas

Skids and Scalawags

Ridolini Innamorato (Italy)
re: June 10, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (Rollo), Madge Kirby (Madge), Pete Aromando, Owen Evans, Frank Alexander, Paul Rondas

Boodle and Bandits

Zigoto Bandit, Zigoto et les Bandits (France)
Ridolini e i Banditi (Italy)
re: June 24, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (Lightning Larry), Pete Aromando, Frank Alexander, Owen Evans, Bill Hauber, Madge Kirby, Lucille Zintheo (later she became Lucille Carlisle)

Hindoos and Hazards

Ridolini e gli Indiani (?) (Italy)
re: July 8, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Larry)

Big Boobs and Bathing Beauties*

Larry und Harry zwei komische Brüder (Germany)
Ridolini ai Bagni di Mare (?) (Italy)
re: July 22, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Lawrence), Madge Kirby (The girl), Frank Alexander (Fatty)

Dunces and Dangers*

Larry der Millionenerbe (K)
Fesselnde Liebe (MoN, together with Stripes and Stumbles) (Germany)
Ridolini in Lotta coi Creditori (?) (Italy)
re: August 5, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Lawrence Semon (Larry), Madge Kirby (His wife), Bill Hauber, Owen Evans, Pete Aromando, Frank Alexander

Mutts and Motors

re: September 2, 1918
dir: Lawrence Semon
auth: Lawrence Semon
prod: Greater Vitagraph
cast: Larry Semon (Larry)

**CONTINUED
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F. Richard Jones:

by James Bronson as originally appeared February 1921

There is no more interesting development in the motion picture field today than the surprising trend away from slapstick and towards a higher type of light comedy. It is to be noted on every side and, more particularly, at the headquarters of rough fun, the Mack Sennett studios, out on Alessandro Street in Los Angeles.

There is no keener observer of the screen than Mack Sennett. It was Sennett who developed the bathing girl type of film farce and who brought it to its most attractive state of perfection. When Sennett himself turns from slapstick - well -

There is no question that Sennett believes that a change is necessary in cinema comedy and there seems to be no question but that he in the dawn of a brisk but light type of humor, minus the pie, the tomato and kindred requisites of the old days. It is interesting to note that Sennett, having decided to bring this about, turned to one Richard Jones to inaugurate the change.

Jones was directing for the Griffith organization at the time, having just completed three Dorothy Gish comedies. The first of these, "*Flying Pat*," has just been released. Sennett wired a remarkable offer - \$105,000 to devote a year to making three super-farces - and began making his preliminary plans.

Jones accepted and rushed westward. Just now he is hard at work upon the first of the new Sennett type of comedies. This will be called "*Heartbalm*" and will be in seven reels, with a cast including Noah Beery, Ethel Grey Terry, Ben Deely, Bill Bevan and the pretty Marie Prevost.

This sudden burst into the spotlight of publicity brings to light an interesting screen personality, for Jones, although he has devoted all his life to the films, has never been well-known. He has been satisfied to linger in the background and wait for Fame to knock on his

door. Yet it was Jones who made "*Yankee Doodle in Berlin*," and that famous money maker, "*Mickey*," which oddly marked the setting of Mabel Normand's glory despite its popularity.

Jones was with Mack Sennett for years before he joined the Griffith staff. Better let us go back to the beginning. Jones was born in St. Louis. He secured his first position with O.T. Crawford, a picture-

esque figure who then controlled a chain of Missouri theaters and was owner on the *Atlas* Producing Company. Crawford was engaged in filming a lurid series of Jesse James thrillers and Jones made his debut in this highly colored atmosphere. He was exactly seventeen and one-half years old at the time. Today he is almost twenty-seven.

After that Jones drifted to the coast and secured a position with Mack Sennett. There he remained over seven years. He began as cutter, rapidly advanced to head of his department and shortly was writing and editing those subtitles so characteristic of the Sennett farces of a few years ago.

It was at this time that "*Mickey*" was started at the Sennett studios as a super-vehicle for the talents of Mabel Normand. One director after another started on the comedy and fell down, until a total of five had dropped by the wayside. Then Mr. Sennett, who always had great faith in Jones, called him and made him a director.

"Make '*Mickey*,'" commanded Sennett, and Jones began. "I started by throwing away everything that had been 'shot' previously.

I took the scenario, which was slightly more than a page in length, and wrote a brand new story. Then I was ready to shoot."

"*Mickey*" established something like a world's record in receipts for screen comedies. Jones's second production, "*Yankee Doodle in Berlin*," was another winner. Then it was that Mr. Griffith, ever on the lookout for budding talent, noted his promise and brought him



A Master of Comedy



life and attractiveness. You sympathize with him – and therefore his tragic and comic experiences are twice as tragic or as funny as they would be if you had no personal interest in him. Chaplin is an even greater example of this, for he really lives for you on the screen.”

Mr. Jones, too, particularly defests the present lot of characters used to people every film comedy. “There is no imagination, no creativeness. The same comic counts, burlesque ministers, and bewhiskered pursuers of the comedian masquerade through every comedy. When is this ever going to change?”

We predict a change – now that Jones is launching his new ideas. His first effort, “Heartbalm,” should be well worth watching. It is a legitimate comedy drama of New York life and Jones guarantees that the laughs will come from the characters and

situations, rather than from the usual farce gags and tricks.

Put “Heart Balm” and Richard Jones down in your memory book.

on, to direct Miss Gish in the Mamaroneck, N.Y. studios.

Mr. Griffith was highly delighted with the work of Jones, but the remarkable Sennett contract proved to be too great an inducement for the young master of comedy.

Jones is an interesting type of cinema worker. Indeed, he literally works all the time. A startling dynamic energy is his. He has but one recreation, yachting. While he was at the Griffith studios he purchased a small yacht and spent his spare time cruising about the Sound off Mamaroneck. This yacht is now being transported in sections across country and Jones will shortly be sailing it off the colorful Sennett beach.

Could any yacht be luckier?

He thinks the main fault of the present day farce is its lack of story. “It is, in fact, a mere chain of supposedly comic incidents,” he says. “No effort is made to develop characters, to create a sympathetic story, to lift it out of the farce rut. Harold Lloyd has stood out of the mass of comedians because he invests a character with



Above: Harry Booker, Slim Somerville, Dick Jones, Hale Hamilton, Charlie Murray, ?, Polly Moran, Arvid Gillstrom, Frank Schoedsach between scenes of “Her Painted Hero”

Right: Between scenes of “Mickey” with Mabel Normand, Jones, George Nichols and others.

PARAMOUNT-MACK SENNETT COMEDY

With this second issue of SLAPSTICK! we're running a long researched project, *Mack Sennett - The Comedies*. Following are the Paramount-Sennett Comedies, and in succeeding issues we'll bring you the First National's, Associated Producers, Pathe's, etc.

About this filmography, which should be considered a "work in progress," all underscored titles are extant in complete or incomplete form on video and/or in international film archives. The distributor (Paramount, Pathe, etc) is listed alongside the producer, Mack Sennett, which is followed by the Sennett production (or story) number. The film's actual or approximate length in 35mm

is listed when known, otherwise length in reels are given. Whether the film is silent and/or sound is mentioned; the Sennett movie still number when known, followed by the distributor's release number. The film's release date, followed by copyright (when registered). The film's working title(s) and filming duration when known. Director(s) and assistant director(s) (when credited); Cinematographer(s); Writer(s); Title Writer(s); and Editor(s) followed by cast (*italicized names* among Warren Sherck's findings, unverified by Slapstick!), synopsis and/or contemporary review.



*to 11/1/17
with Best Minister
From the Boy
Comie.
Charlie Murray*

CHARLIE MURRAY

Cast:

Charlie Murray (An Average Husband), Mary Thurman (A Wife Above Average), Wayland Trask (Her Unusual Husband), Eva Thatcher (Average Husband's Wife), Pat Forde (An Unusual Detective), And the Girls (Vera Steadman, Phyllis Haver, Gonda Durand, Elenore Field, Marvel Rea and Roxanna McGowan), Ben Turpin (Hotel Desk Clerk), Slim Summerville (A Waiter), Glen Cavender (The Bartender), James Donnelly (Hotel Clerk in 2nd reel), Wallace Beery (In Hotel Lobby), Eddie Cline (Messenger Boy), Teddy & Pepper (Themselves), Tom Kennedy (A Policeman).

Synopsis:

The trouble with Charlie Murray was he was too good natured and too artistic to suit the volcanic temperament of his wife, Eva. He did the best he could for her, but simply could not help admiring the beauties on the side, a fact which landed him in all sorts of trouble.

Of course it wasn't his fault that the hotel clerk (Ben Turpin) switched rooms on him and forgot to tell him, nor was it his fault that the line on which he hoped to land a flounder brought up a wonderful necklace, so that one may set him down as a victim of circumstances.

Nor could he help falling for Mary, all of which indicates there was a pretty tangle at the time when Mary's hubby, Wayland Trask, arrived on the scene full of suspicion.

Review: MPW:

The element of fun in this two part farce comedy is clean and unobjectionable for the most part, unless objection be raised to the appearance in close-up of a galaxy of bathing girls in one-piece suits. The theme of the picture centers about the capers of a husband. A change of rooms at the hotel at which the two couples in-question are stopping gives opportunity for many complications that are strictly funny. Charlie Murray is the comedy star.

A BEDROOM BLUNDER

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#3)
Two reels (2,150 ft), silent MS1 (P3301)
Released October 7, 1917
originally scheduled for release September 29, 1917
Copyright September 2, 1923 and re-released in 1923 by
Paramount as "Room 23"
work title: *Beach Story*, started July 27 completed August 27,
1917

Directed by Eddie Cline
Cinematography by Phil H. Whitman

ROPING HER ROMEO

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#1)
Two reels (1,725 ft), silent MS2 (P3302)
Released October 21, 1917
originally scheduled for release September 15, 1917
Copyright September 23, 1923
Re-released in 1923 by Paramount under the same title
work titles: *Bandit Story*; *A Lovesick Bandit*

Directed by Fred Fishback, assisted by Whitey Soveren
Cinematography by Hans F. Koenekamp



Slim Summerville and Polly Moran may find something funny now, but Ben Turpin has the last laugh in "Roping Her Romeo," Sennett's first production for Paramount but his second release.

Cast:

Polly Moran (Sheriff Nell, *The Pride of Triggerville*), Ben Turpin (Honest Eyed Jack, *A Poor Butterfly*), Slim Summerville (Black Pete, *The Leading Scoundrel*), Ethel Teare (Helen Bent, in the *Marriage Market*), Franklyn Bond (A Gentleman Gambler), Glen Cavender (a villain), Teddy, the dog (Himself), Wayland Trask, Eva Thatcher, James Donnelly, Gonda Durand, Eleanor Field, Phyllis Haver, Pat Kelly, Roxanna McGowan, Marvel Rea, Vera Steadman, Edith Valk

Synopsis:

Sheriff Nell was no kill-joy and she didn't want to interfere with any of the innocent joys of Triggerville, but it did annoy her to have a gun fight break out on the day she baked pies.

It was this way; Honest-Eyed Jack and Black Pete, the scoundrel, were rivals for Nell's fair hand. Jack loved her for herself and her pies; Pete because he calculated to throw the law off his trail by marrying the sheriff. Jack had that morning won the lady's hand. Jealous Pete had followed him back to the thirst emporium where Jack waited on Triggerville's four hundred customers. An insult is heard and a gun fight begins.

Leaving her pies, Nell rushes to the place; calms the storm and forces the rivals to make up.

But Pete's wicked heart still gnaws at him. He gets Honest-Eyed Jack into a poker game. Jack had an extra ace tethered out for emergencies, but the treacherous Pete sneaked it away and the little honeymoon love cot went into Pete's pocket.

But Nell was a resolute woman. Hearing of the disaster, she walked straight up to Pete's table and said, "Pete, I'll take a hand and remember you won't steal any aces from little Nell." And so the roses came back into Jack's future again.

With the deed back in her pocket, Nell bustles over to the honeymoon cottage and applies a broom to dust. Jack was as honest as a very short day is long, but Jack was no housekeeper. But in the midst of her labors the door opened and a woman entered. She was all dolled up in furs and everything.

Reader, we shudder to tell you who this woman is. The truth is that Jack had been on the matrimonial remnant counter for some time. He was the oldest and most faithful customer of the matrimonial agencies but alas, without result. By an irony of fate, the agency finally found him a bride on the day that Sheriff Nell accepted him.

But that is not all. Desperate over the loss of his deed and the matrimonial cottage, Jack tried to hold up the five o'clock stage, not knowing that Pete had already held it up and cleaned the passengers.

But it all comes right in the end. Nell discovers the duplicity of Pete, and personally leads a posse to capture him. There

is a wild and hair-raising chase, with Nell's cow punchers in pursuit of the mounted bandits.

Pete is brought to earth at last and Jack and Nell renew their love.



Chester Conklin making a smashing entrance before Gloria Swanson, "The Pullman Bride," and her fiancée, Mack Swain, while Wayland Trask, Tom Kennedy, Glen Cavender, Polly Moran and Laura LaVarnie anticipate a catastrophe.

THE PULLMAN BRIDE

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#3)

Two reels (1,830 ft), silent MS3 (P3303)

Released November 4, 1917

originally scheduled for release October 13, 1917

No copyright registered

work title: *The Train Robbers*

Directed by Clarence Badger; assisted by Harry Kerr
Cinematography by J. R. Lockwood

Cast:

Gloria Swanson (The Girl), Mack Swain (Her Chosen), Chester Conklin (A Rejected Suitor), Laura LaVarnie (Her Mother), Tom Kennedy (A Bandit), Polly Moran (Sheriff Nell), Wayland Trask, Gene Rogers, Jack Cooper, Vera Steadman, Abdul Maljan, Glen Cavender, Albert Gillespie, Tony O'Sullivan, Eleanor Field, Phyllis Haver, Marvel Rea

Review: MPW, November 11, 1917, page 1043:

It isn't on record that feminine Pullman travelers generally don pajamas in their berths; usually there isn't enough room to fix up as fetchingly as they might wish and the dressing rooms are always so crowded.

Of course there is a hold-up, and the wicked "stick-up man" almost loses his nerve when confronted by the bevy of charmers in bifurcated chiffon. Also there are dozens of amusing incidents, hilarious episodes which keep things humming to the end of the picture.

Chester Conklin is the lover who lost in the touching story embodied in "The Pullman Bride." Gloria Swanson has a fine role, and there are a lot of genuinely talented Mack Sennett farceurs besides the big ensemble of delectable femininity.

ARE WAITRESSES SAFE?

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#4)

Two reels (1,858 ft), silent MS4 (P3304)

Released November 18, 1917



Louise Fazenda and Pepper, her feline friend, enjoy a cat nap between scenes of "Are Waitresses Safe?"

Copyright September 11, 1923
Re-released in 1923 by Paramount under the same title
work title: *Bakeshop Story*, started August 17, completed
October 11, 1917

Directed by Victor Heerman
Cinematography by Fred Woodruff Jackman

Cast:

Louise Fazenda (Only a Working Girl), Ben Turpin (Who Loved Her So), Slim Summerville (Who Had Objections), Glen Cavender (Their Mutual Friend & the Chef), Wayland Trask (Frustrated Customer), Tony O'Sullivan (Lady with the cat), Jack Cooper (A Steady Customer), Phyllis Haver, Vera Steadman & Grover Ligon (In Dining Room), Gene Rogers (The Mansion Owner), Laura LaVarnie, Tom Kennedy, Cliff Bowes & Wallace Beery (At Mansion Party), Teddy & Pepper (As Themselves), Bobby Dunn, Marvel Rea, Eleanor Field, Gonda Durand, Hughie Mack, Roxanna McGowan

Synopsis:

It all starts in a hotel's combination bakery/restaurant where we find Louise Fazenda juggling china and Ben Turpin doing his best to hold down a waiting job - with disastrous results.

His downfall is partly due to Slim, who is as tough as he is stringy, and who is Ben's bitter and unscrupulous rival for the fair hand of our heroine, Louise.

She begins her career as a cook and waitress in the hotel. The chef complains that her biscuits are too heavy, so she makes them so light that they bounce like rubber balls. Teddy, the dog, runs away with her string of sausages, throwing the hotel into an uproar. Then a funny game of pool is played, in which a billiard expert writes his name on the table with one of the balls.

Into the melee comes a drunk who tries to do everything he's asked but can't control his feelings or his feet, with the result that he materially assists in landing both Louise and Ben among the jobless thousands.

But it is not for long for we soon find Louise safely ensconced in the home of the Mayor - for whom she will house-sit while he and the whole family go away on a trip leaving the house and all the family jewels in her care.

It was too good a chance to give a party.

The old mansion never before staged a party like this one. Ben and Louise were there as hosts and the family jewels glittered as brightly on Louise's neck as ever they had on the proud lady who owned them.

Slim and his gang hadn't been invited but they went just the same and stirred up the merriest little free-for-all that ever happened. Even then it wouldn't have been so bad had not the

Mayor and his party returned at that very inopportune moment and landed in the middle of the melee, which ends up in a big splash both literally and figuratively.

Review: MPW:

Anyone taking seriously the title of this comedy would be forced to say that waitresses are not safe in Mack Sennett comedies as they might be elsewhere. Louise Fazenda, who plays the waitress in this number has weathered many difficult predictions of the knockabout type, but her experiences in this two reel offering are about as complicated and funny as could be devised. The subject is laughable from start to finish and an excellent example of this sort of comedy at its best.



Chester Conklin, Lillian Biron and Billy Armstrong in a scene from "An International Sneak"

AN INTERNATIONAL SNEAK

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#5)

Two reels (1,915 ft), silent MS5 (P3305)

Released December 2, 1917

No copyright registered

work title: *Dynamite Story* started September 8, completed
October 24, 1917

Directed by Fred Fishback
Cinematography by Hans F. Koenekamp

Cast:

Chester Conklin (A Foreign Spy), Billy Armstrong (The Juvenile), Ethel Teare (A Female Detective), Lillian Biron (The Juvenile's Sweetheart), Erle Kenton (Her Father, the Powder King), Gonda Durand, Tom Kennedy, Vera Steadman

Synopsis:

It is Conklin's job to get the formula for a high explosive which the Powder King is using. If he can't get it, he is to blow up the whole munitions plant. Ethel learns all this when she goes through Chester's grip bag. Her job is to "get the goods" on Conklin. Ethel is such a beautiful girl that he tells her everything and even tips her off to a meeting of International Sneaks of his own calibre and Ethel, in order to get the goods on them, puts on mens clothing.

Comes then a series of mix-ups in the middle of which Chet saves the Powder King's daughter from drowning and becomes a hero. The affair got Conklin the inside track to the powder mill and the coveted formula, but it also made a strong enemy of Billy, Lillian's sweetheart. It's an open question whether Chester or Billy was the biggest bonehead. Between them they distanced all competitors for the ivory championship, it culminating in the mutual possession of a

bomb with a lighted fuse. The things they did to get rid of that sizzling bomb, and the unique manner in which this said bomb refused to be shunted to a place of safety is the climax of the film.

Review: MPW, December 22, 1917, page 1803:

This small inhabitant of the deep has the courage of a peccary, the grip of a bulldog, and the motive power of a whale. Hooked on a line it pulls a rowboat over the water with the celerity of a speedboat. The presence of the hook "in its midst" does not prevent it biting a hole in the bottom of the boat and sinking the craft, throwing its two would-be occupants into the water. Neither does the aforementioned instrument in any measure retard or handicap the action of Mr. Conklin when he starts retaliation on the fisherman who initiated the intimate alliance between them. The adhesive, cohesive finny wonder sinks its fangs into the seat of the trousers of the drowning man and proceeds to shake its scaly body in a manner to reflect credit on a terrier performing with a rat. When the human is drawn up on the pier, Conklin's grip remains unbroken.

Of course, the foregoing is but one of the incidents in the comedy. It will make fun, however, while it is on, as will the subsidiary happening of the land fisherman whose far-flung hook collides with a perfectly good skirt, and carries that filmy garment out over the water to the consternation of its youthful bare-kneed owner and the entertainment of the more or less innocent bystanders. When Walrus has contributed his share to the rescue of one of the drowning men by throwing a heavy rope to him, absentmindedly failing to retain one end of it, he continues his heroic career by recovering the separated garment.

The cast romps through the comedy, sometimes so fast, that is difficult keeping track of the thinly defined threads of the farce.

THAT NIGHT

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#6)
Two reels (1990 ft), silent MS6 (P3306)
Released December 16, 1917
No copyright registered
work title: *Rink Story*

Directed by Eddie Cline
Cinematography by Phil H. Whitman

Cast:

Charlie Murray (A Cafe Entertainer), Mary Thurman (A Chorus Girl), Wayland Trask (Another Entertainer), Wallace Beery (The Cafe Proprietor), and the Girls (Vera Steadman, Eleanor Field, Phyllis Haver, Roxanna McGowan, Marvel Rea), Gene Rogers, Eva Thatcher, Tom Kennedy, Glen Cavender, Ben Turpin, Pat Kelly

Synopsis:

There is harmony in the cafe until it is accidentally discovered that lovely Mary has had a fortune left her, whereupon Beery, the proprietor, Trask and Murray, two entertainers, all race to her home with the idea of marrying her. Now it chances that Beery is already married, but in order to get the money he hires a crook to pose as a minister, planning to get the fortune through a fake marriage.

He nearly succeeded. The minister arrives promptly, however, as does Trask, who, finding the parson at hand, bribes him to double cross Beery and marry him (Trask) to Mary. Wayland, though, believes it to be a wedding on the square.

Then ensues a sequence of rapid fire complications where "You're not married!" becomes the slogan of everybody, including the police. Once the bogus status of the minister has been established, there is a wild chase after the couple, who, in the meantime, have secured a nice little honeymoon flat.

Before they are located, however, the newlyweds have a scrap so that the honeymoon flat is vacant when Charlie arrives. He, too, gets into trouble and, indeed, is so lit up he does not know that he is in the wrong room and he's in the bathroom in his pajamas when Mary arrives.

Naturally it doesn't look good to "Hubby" when he appears on the scene and he isn't a bit slow in unlimbering his trusty gun. And into the melee somehow comes mother-in-law, the police and a bunch of thoroughly irate citizens of the ultra respectable type, whom the police have routed out through mistaken identity.

Meanwhile a real parson arrives and the principals again assemble for another wedding which is about to take place, when it is learned that no fortune is coming to Mary. Right away Trask gets cold feet, Beery being already out of the running, but noble Charlie steps to the front. "I love you for yourself alone," he chortles, and they are now one, only to learn that the act has, after all, brought Mary her fortune.

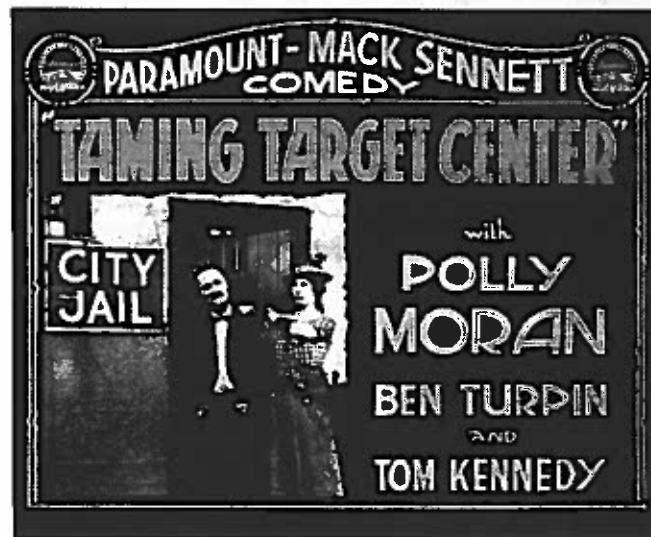
Review: MPW, December 15, 1917, page 1647:

The two-part farce *That Night* presents no distinctly refined situations. It will no doubt be greeted by the ordinary audience as a tremendously funny offering, but as entertainment for the more cultured it will hardly be welcome.

The direction of the picture by Eddie Cline is ably and artistically performed.

Fast and furious is the fun in *That Night*, forthcoming Paramount-Mack Sennett comedy, scheduled for release December 16. The effect of the film may be described as "heady," and advance showings indicate that Producer Mack Sennett has outdone himself in creating a whirlwind developing new laughs every second.

Featured in the cast are Charles Murray, Wayland Trask, and the beautiful Mary Thurman, ably supported by Wallace Beery, Gene Rogers, Eva Thatcher and Tom Kennedy. Eddie Cline directed the picture under Mr. Sennett's personal supervision. The bevy of beauties who are inseparable from Sennett comedies appear to advantage in cabaret scenes and novel effects are secured in the camera work during the pursuit of an eloping pair, who believe themselves married but are not.



TAMING TARGET CENTER

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#8)
Two reels (1,867 ft), silent MS7 (P3307)
Released December 30, 1917
No copyright registered
work title: *Reform of Hell's Half-Acre*

Directed by William S. Campbell
Cinematography by Fred W. Jackman

Cast:

Polly Moran (The New Sheriff), Ben Turpin (The Old Sheriff), Tom Kennedy (The Cafe Proprietor), Gonda Durand (His Leading Vampire), Larry McGrath, Laura LaVarnie, Gene Rogers, George Binns, Jack Cooper, Marvel Rea

Synopsis:

Target Center is a rather sleepy little town – that is until Polly arrives – and Ben has been a good sheriff, especially when nothing else was going on. The village jail made a most satisfactory chicken roost and all was merry.

This was all changed, however, when Polly arrived. She had planned to marry Ben and came to pay his folks a visit. The time she had picked to arrive wasn't the quietest in the history of Target Center by any means, for some of the inhabitants had planned a jolly little riot – but they didn't know it was a riot until after Polly had taken a hand, when the riot became a rout – and the jail was filled with lodgers, not chickens this time.

Meanwhile Polly had discovered that Ben was no more than a coward, a fact which certainly didn't make a hit with her. The breach was widened by Target Center's leading vampire, Gonda Durand, although it wasn't Ben's fault. As so often happens, circumstantial evidence proved his complete undoing. Caught by Polly herself and Tom Kennedy, the cafe proprietor, apparently in the very act of having a friendly drink with "that terrible vamp," he tries to make his escape by hiding under a barrel – but without success.

Next comes a tangle which implicates Polly, the cafe proprietor, the parson, a couple of vampires and many others, leading up to a certain Red Letter Day when Target Center donned its best suit and all its Sunday best and went to church for the first time in all its lurid existence.

Review: MPW, January 5, 1918, page 94:

The effective entrance of Sheriff Polly Moran into that bedlam, Target Center, is a bit of able stagecraft. Things had been getting lively between the dance hall and the mission church across the way, and the old sheriff, cross-eyed Ben Turpin, had much more than his hands full. The bad man, Tom Kennedy, and his right hand prairie flower, Gonda Durand, were running Ben off the claim. Then Ben's girl Polly arrives on the whirlwind of a mustang. She and the horse try to clean up the hotel. It is a chase upstairs and downstairs, canter and trot, till she gets the bunch outside where she ropes the lot at once and drags them off to the jail.

Cross-eyed Ben has a streak of yellow in him. There's a cry for help and Polly makes a dash over the prairie to save a drowning child after a death-defying leap over the canyon. When she comes back, the bad bunch is out of the coop and she finds Ben in a room with Gonda. Ben didn't know of Gonda's presence, he was afraid of her. Polly's mother told her that she could expect just that so she flounces over to the minister's. There are two adjoining rooms at the mission and she and the minister dress before the lighted shades and those outside have another scandal started.

THE KITCHEN LADY

A Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy (prod.#10)
Two reels (1,985 ft), silent MS8 (P3308)
Released January 13, 1918
No copyright registered
work title: *Boarding House Story*, started October 31 completed December 14, 1917

Directed by Eddie Cline



Someone has got Louise Fazenda's goat in "The Kitchen Lady."

Cinematography by Phil H. Whitman

Cast:

Louise Fazenda (The Kitchen Lady), Slim Summerville (A Landlady's Son), Glen Cavender (A Lion Tamer), Alice Maison (Object of Attention), Tony O'Sullivan (Aunt Mary), Edgar Kennedy, Eva Thatcher (The Landlady), Pepper, the Cat (Herself), George H. Binns, Jack Cooper, Eleanor Field, Fanny Kelly, Alatia Marton, Roxanna McGowan, Vera Steadman

Review: MPW, January 26, 1918, page 526:

There are many different things in *The Kitchen Lady*, that insure its giving a royal good time to any spectator who can enjoy fun. Louise Fazenda plays a kitchen slavey of a boarding house, and she is supported by Slim Summerville and Glen Cavender, two boarders, Tony O'Sullivan, the landlady, mother of Slim, and Alice Maison, a very pretty girl boarder. Pep, a remarkable house cat, a tame fish that bites and doesn't let go, and a black bear who performs out of season, each adds a good deal of unexpected and thoroughly enjoyable amusement. It is an exceptionally good picture to book and will be welcomed by children and others at a theater or any other place.

Trick photography plays a large part in the modern comic film and it is always acceptable. It is used in this film to make old things arrive so unexpectedly that they bring new fun. But new situations are not lacking in this picture, and some of the best of them are furnished by the house cat named Pep that at one place goes fishing without knowing it and is caught by the tail. A trained bear also adds some truly comic rough play that makes laughter.

The story of the slavey who becomes an heiress is full of possibilities, and they are well made use of here. The picture is one that can be advertised as a "scream".

TO BE
CONTINUED
NEXT ISSUE!



BILL OF FARE

- 1 Madge Kirby
- 2 Vernon Dent
- 3 Jess C. Weldon
- 4 Jack H. Richardson
- 5 Vincent McDermott
- DIRECTORS
- 6 Herman C. Raymaker
- 7 Fred C. Windermere

San Powers behind the camera

HANK MANN

AT YOUR SERVICE

IN TWO REELS

Wish You
Were Here...



Have a Great Summer!